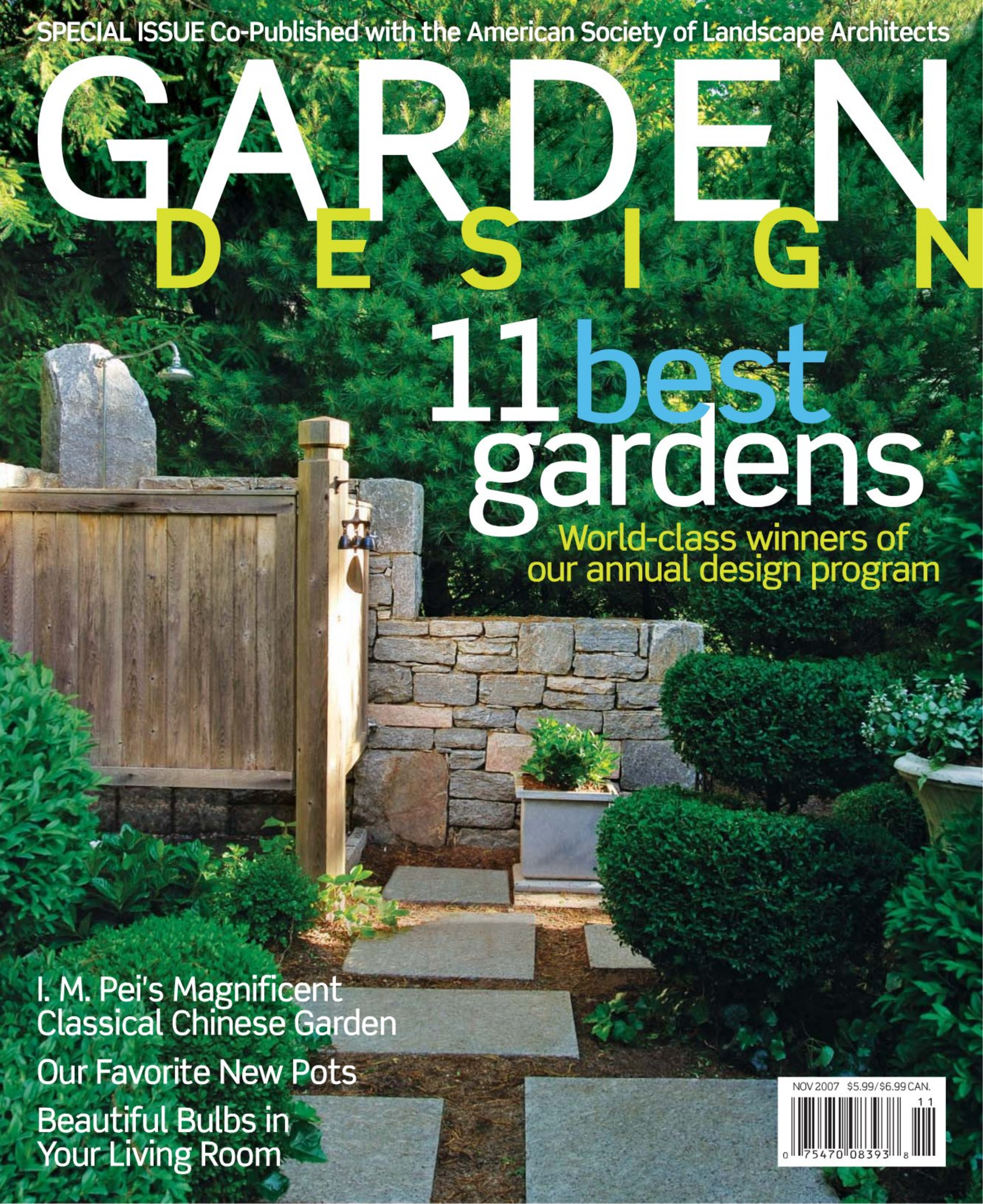
SPECIAL ISSUE Co-Published with the American Society of Landscape Architects

GARDEN DESIGN



11 best gardens

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Monrovia Style:

Presents THE PHILOSOPHER

Topher Delaney's ground-breaking career as an environmental artist has encompassed a wide breadth of projects from private residences to sanctuary gardens. Through the cultural interpretation of the landscape, her practice, SEAM Studio, has evolved traditional garden architecture into an exploration of cultural, social, and artistic narratives.



"I am inspired by Monrovia's vast community of available plants, consistent new introductions, and comprehensive educational support. All of this allows me to create combinations of texture, color and scale that result in gardens of excellence."

–Topher Delaney

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OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2007



COVERS LUNADA BAY: JACK COYIER, DESIGN BY ARTECHO ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE. CONNECTICUT: JEFF MCNAMARA, DESIGN BY WESLEY STOUT ASSOCIATES. **LEFT:** BILLY CUNNINGHAM, DESIGN BY SAWYER/BERSON ARCHITECTURE & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE.


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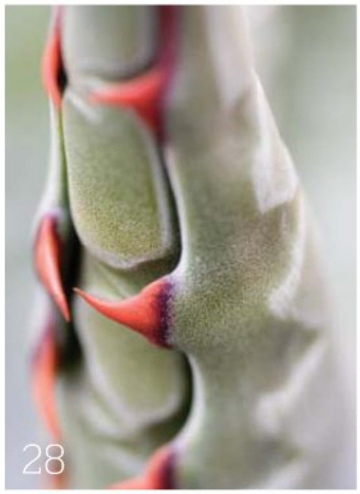
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Departments

For more, check out gardendesign.com.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: DEDON; BARB RIES; TOM MCWILLIAM; MICHAEL KRAUS; KERUN IP

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My Winners



SAM BROWN

PEOPLE OFTEN ASK ME, WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE garden? Truth be told, I'm a magazine editor, and that means I'm more likely to be stuck at a computer than garden-hopping, more apt to be scrutinizing an invoice than an agave. Actually, I think the best way for me to evaluate a garden is the same way readers will see it — how it comes across on the printed page. The photos, text and plans should convey what's special about the garden: how the owners can enjoy it, how it relates to the location, how it gives us new ideas to use in our own backyards.

So how do the gardens come across in this issue full of great gardens, the winners of the residential design program that *Garden Design* co-sponsors with the American Society of Landscape Architects?

Despite my California upbringing and a strong bent toward the casual, I'm drawn to the stolid style of New England gardens making use of regional materials and contemporary minimalism — like the Shaker-inspired landscape on page 70 designed by Wesley Stout Associates. Its clean formality looks built to last and creates a sense of calm. The very comfortable dog lounging on the chaise lends a note of surprise, if not anarchy — always a good thing in a garden.

The casual comfort of Mario Schjetnan's weekend place in the countryside of Mexico (page 82) is as inviting as a hammock with a margarita waiting for you. Rustic cobblestones, a slight touch of water, shady overhangs, bananas and citrus, along with the surprising pink wall (more anarchy) all give it a powerful sense of place. The spare, modernistic touches create a reassuring sense of order — which perhaps we can chalk up to Schjetnan's partly Norwegian roots or the time he spent at UC Berkeley absorbing the work of California mid-century landscape masters Eckbo and Royston.

As for gardens I've actually spent time in, no one would accuse me of playing favorites if I mentioned my mother's garden, now just a vague memory seen through my eyes as a little boy. My mother was eclectic if not chaotic in style (I recall a three-week phase of hers when she painted half a dozen pieces of furniture Pennsylvania-Dutch-style to accompany the French provincial pieces she had bought from antique shops). In the garden around our California farmhouse, orange cannas flopped over, dahlias outgrew their stakes, ground cherries randomly appeared, an oak rained leaf-chomping, web-spinning worms, manzanitas buzzed with bees. It was a colorful, lively place, which may explain my taste for garden order along with a touch of anarchy — and why I appreciate all the winners in this issue so much. — **BILL MARKEN,** EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

P.S. *Look for a new editor writing in this space in our next issue:* Garden Design*'s lively and super-talented current style editor, Donna Dorian. I will stay connected with the magazine but give up the cross-country commute. Thanks to all the wonderful readers who have shared their enthusiasm for* Garden Design *while I've been around.*


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Molano and Lucera Hillstone blend with an overgrout technique

Follow the Rules

It has been a pleasure reading your magazine over the years, in terms of both content and the wonderful visuals. I look forward to seeing and learning about new plants and new ways to use both familiar and new plants. On occasion though I do get annoyed by the improper presentation of generic, as in genus, names of plants. The most recent example of this was on page 59 of the June/July 2007 issue. In the third line of the first full paragraph of the left column, it reads, "The genus aciphylla." As the reference is to the scientific name at the genus level, the name should be both capitalized and in italics, *Aciphylla.* Later in that paragraph a species in this genus is identified and its name is presented correctly. I understand there may be confusion when the genus name and the common name of a group of plants are the same, for example, *Hosta*/hosta. But that was not the case here. — **Edward Weiss, Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA**

We asked our botanical consultant about proper form and here is her response: The customary rules of botanical nomenclature, especially in scientific journals and papers, capitalize and italicize the genus name when it is used to refer to the genus, not used as a common name. When both the genus and species names are given, both are italicized but only the genus name is capitalized.

General reader publications, however, often have their own style rules. The New York Times, *for example, capitalizes but does not italicize any scientific names for plants, and does not use single quotation marks around cultivar names. Though full botanical names are presented in italics (genus capped), the custom at* Garden Design *is to lowercase the genus when used in similar fashion to a common name, and to capitalize but not italicize it when the genus name is noted as a genus per se but not followed by a species name. Except, of course, when we forget.* — **Dora Galitzki**

Shady Salvias

I was interested to read in your Growing column in the Aug/Sept 2007 issue that some salvias require high shade (page 26). My garden in Manhattan is surrounded by a number of tall buildings, which means it gets no more than three or four hours of sun per day. Can you tell me a few varieties of salvias that might grow well in my backyard? Thanks. — **Donna Wallinski, New York, NY**



COURTESY TIMBER PRESS

Although most people do think of salvias as sun lovers, many in fact prefer a partly sunny location, and some even need a shadier spot or at least high shade like that found under high-limbed trees. While many of these salvias would not be winter hardy in New York, they would still be beautiful if used as annuals, and can make outstanding container specimens, used singly or mixed with other plants. Salvias can be late to bloom, so be prepared for the wait and savor the anticipation.

High-shade species include Salvia cacaliifolia *(gentian-blue flowers blooming into late autumn, Zones 8 to 10),* S. madrensis *(tall with butter-yellow flowers, to Zone 7b),* S. recurva *(late bloomer with large, dark purple flowers),* S. regla *(mountain sage, native to Texas and Mexico, shrubby with red flowers, to Zone 7b),* S. shannonii *(shown above, shrubby with lilac flowers),* S. sonomensis *(creeping sage, California native with purplish flowers on mats of creeping stems, Zone 8) and* S. wagneriana *(red to pink flowers, mild climates, Zone 10).*

For a truly shady place, try S. glutinosa *(Jupiter's distaff, found in mountainous woodlands in Europe and Asia, Zone 5) and* S. koyamae *(woodland sage, a bold-leaved sage with pale yellow flowers native to Japan, hardy across a broad range, Zones 4b to 10). For more information, and to find salvias that love part sun, see* The New Book of Salvias *(soon to be reprinted by Timber Press, available in spring 2008) by Betsy Clebsch, the writer of the Growing article.* — **Ed.**



















This iris brooch set with 139 Montana sapphires was shown by Tiffany at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris. It was later bought by the railroad magnate Henry Walters. From *Jeweled Garden* (Vendome Press).

COURTESY THE VENDOME PRESS

The Jeweled Garden

A child's daisy chain, a buttonhole for a wedding, an Hawaiian lei garland — the impulse to turn to nature for adornment is universally understood, and jewelry »



René Lalique was renowned for carved ivory orchids, like this sumptuous tiara, c. 1903-04. The central rib of each gold enamel leaf is picked out in diamonds.

fyi Mish Tworkowski of Mish New York is a jeweler with a passion for gardens — every year he donates one of his signature pieces to Lotusland, the fantastical Santa Barbara garden created by the late Ganna Walska. The auction proceeds (this year his lotus brooch raised $60,000) directly benefit the garden. In 18-karat yellow and rose gold, the brooch (below) is accented with diamonds and features a hidden green peridot. See lotusland.org.



wrought in the form of flowers, leaves and insects is an old tradition that, thanks to its powerful link to the primitive, is somehow always new.

The recent book *Jeweled Garden* by Suzanne Tennenbaum and Janet Zapata (Vendome Press, $50) celebrates botanically inspired jewelry with a gorgeous array of examples that range from a Greek wreath of gold oak leaves, dating from 350 B.C., to a present-day Cartier necklace of coral cherries, cabochon ruby raspberries, pearl turnips and amethyst flowers.

Certain plants captivate through the ages. Bunches of grapes and ivy leaf garlands turn up in practically every other era from Roman to Victorian. Orchids reach heights of swooning lushness in the art nouveau period of Lalique. Some flowers are co-opted into icons — the fashion house of Chanel took the camellia for its own — while others, like the palm tree, sparkle in the spotlight for just a moment. But as co-author Janet Zapata says: "Roses are always the favorite; every decade has them. In the 1930s they took on a rectilinear art deco shape; in the '40s and '50s they were more naturalistic. But the rose is always a safe bet, especially in a weak economy." For the ultimate rose, weep over the diamond brooch owned by Princess Mathilde Bonaparte, a niece of Napoleon.

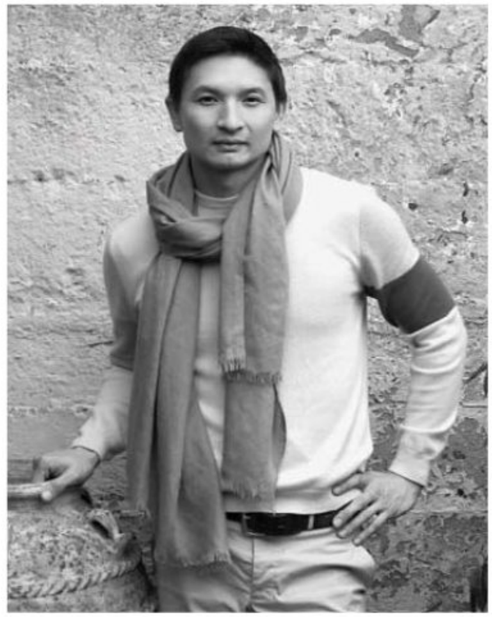
A strong economy tends to bring out an iconoclastic mood that favors inventiveness. A bunch of radishes brooch in coral and peridot (Rene Boivin), chili pepper earrings (Michele della Valle) and a family of mushroom brooches (Stefan Hemmerle) are examples of quirky pieces that confident, high-risk spenders take delight in owning — or giving.

Today, with the luxury market booming in all things from handbags to spa treatments, Zapata notes that the big houses — Cartier, Tiffany, Van Cleef & Arpels and others — have traversed the "masstige" Rubicon of marketing their brands as luxe for all (for example, the ubiquitous Tiffany heart by Peretti) and are now returning to their roots as makers of opulent personal items for the very rich. The new mood puts the emphasis on high drama and creativity — "it" jewelry that, preferably, no one else has. And in this rarified, looking-glass world, simple images drawn from nature are eternally popular.

Writer and blogger Lori Ettlinger Gross, who watches trends at jewelhistory.com, agrees that botanical themes are as alive and relevant as ever: "The 'greening' of our society has resulted in a deeper appreciation of botanicals and their power to heal us," she says. "Anything that is organic is popular."

A new generation of artist designers, such as James de Givenchy at his label Taffin, are making new stylistic plays out of juxtaposing nature with exclusivity. His cartoonlike potted cactus brooch in cabochon emeralds, set with red spinels, is a modern day answer to the Napoleonic rose — recognizable, yet transformed, it places the familiar out of ordinary reach. — **JOANNA FORTNAM**

TOP TO BOTTOM: COURTESY VENDOME PRESS; COURTESY MISH NEW YORK





Bell reed may be hard to find, but Dat Pham (above) of Living Green in San Francisco thinks it's worth it. In California, check with San Marcos Growers (smgrowers.com) for a retail source.

i love this plant

Bell Reed

When I visit artist and gardener Marcia Donahue, she has my complete affection, but not my undivided attention. Uncommon even in her delightfully idiosyncratic Berkeley garden, *Cannomois virgata*, or bell reed, causes my mind to wander in its direction.

It commands attention, its architectural bundles of stalks growing eight feet tall plus, with cinnamon-colored sheaths and an abundant cascade of plume-like foliage resembling green ostrich feathers. Ideal as a tall textural accent, I prefer it as a focal point.

If you have well-draining, acidic soil, you should succeed with this restio from South Africa, where it takes cold snaps as low as 20 degrees. In areas lacking perfect conditions, containers are ideal — you can control the soil medium and easily winterize it in regions with snow. The container's colors can even be used to highlight the cinnamon, salmon, light coral spectacle of the new stems.

If you've ever flirted with Mexican weeping bamboo, *Otatea acuminata*, or another restio from Africa, *Elegia capensis*, I urge you to start a love affair with *Cannomois virgata*. — **DAT PHAM**

LEFT: MARION BRENNER

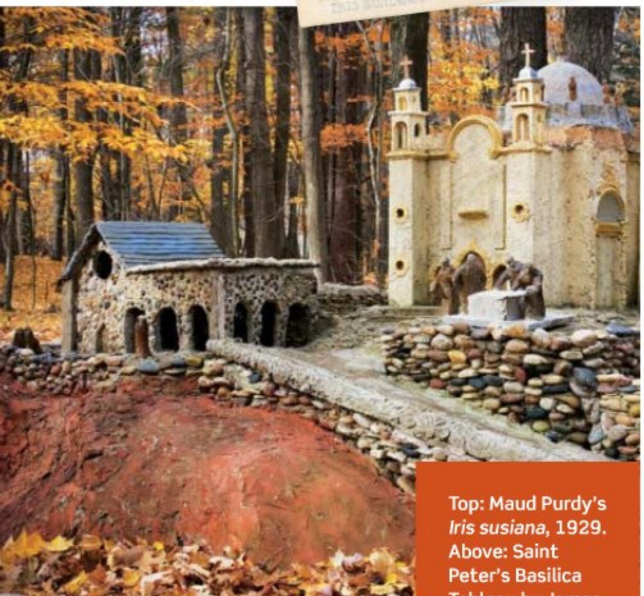




events

So Much to See

From carnivorous plants to folk-art creations, there's a lot going on in the gardening world



Top: Maud Purdy's *Iris susiana*, 1929. Above: Saint Peter's Basilica Tableau by James Tellen, part of Sublime Spaces & Visionary Worlds.

■ CHRISTOPHER BRADLEY-HOLE: ENGLISH GARDEN GOES MODERN

Royal Oak Foundation
Seeds for Thought Lecture Series
Los Angeles: Oct. 28
New York City: Oct. 30
Lake Forest: Nov. 1 The traditional English country house garden is a classic, but how do you make it fresh and modern? Innovative and internationally acclaimed landscape designer Christopher Bradley-Hole has found a way, guided by the architecture of the house and utilizing proportion, natural materials and a variety of plants. Bradley-Hole has designed many private and public gardens, garnered numerous awards, including top honors at the Chelsea Flower Show, and written two books: *The Minimalist Garden* and *Making the Modern Garden* (both from Monacelli). *For more information and to register, call 800-913-6565 x201 or see royal-oak.org/lectures.*

■ CHOMP!

Conservatory of Flowers
Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA
Through Nov. 4 Underwater traps, hair-trigger hinges snapping shut, pools of digestive enzymes, glistening droplets of foot-grabbing goo — not science fiction or a bad dream but the fascinating and highly developed tools of carnivorous plants. Ranging from the statuesque pitcher plants of the southeastern United States to the shimmering sundews of South Africa to the strange pendulous Nepenthes of Borneo, these meat eaters have evolved unusual mechanisms to find food in challenging habitats. *For more information, see conservatoryofflowers.org.*

■ DRAWING FROM LIFE: MAUD H. PURDY AND BOTANICAL ART AT BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN

Through Nov. 11 For the past 90 years an impressive roster of women botanical illustrators have painted plants at Brooklyn Botanic Garden in New York, beginning with the renowned Maud Purdy in the early 20th century, BBG's staff artist for over 30 years. This exhibition of over 50 works compares Purdy's bold, meticulous images with those of 13 other women artists, past and present, including members of BBG's Florilegium Society. *For more information, see bbg.org.*

■ SUBLIME SPACES & VISIONARY WORLDS: BUILT ENVIRONMENTS OF VERNACULAR ARTISTS

John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI
Through Jan. 6 Eschewing traditional views of art, trash and outdoor spaces, this exhibition of works by 22 artist/environment builders takes the mundane and makes it transcendent. Concrete menageries, thrones of bone, towers of steel, dream-inspired whirligigs, oversized Wild West characters — in the hands of these little-known artists, any material is a worthy medium and an opportunity for personal expression. The mission of the arts center since the late 1960s has been to preserve and record such folk-art works, and this, its largest exhibit by far, includes thousands of pieces from its permanent collection. *For more information, see jmkac.org.*

■ WORLD ORCHID CONFERENCE

Sheraton Miami Mart Hotel & Exhibition Center, Miami, FL
Jan. 23-27 It's orchid mania in Miami, a rare chance to experience the largest and most prestigious orchid event in the world, held only once every three years and returning to the United States for the first time in over two decades. The show's 19th incarnation, next year's event is themed Orchids — Nature's Masterpiece. Thousands of orchids from around the globe will be arriving in South Florida to flaunt their beauty in eye-popping displays, and to tempt shoppers hungry for orchids to take home and treasure. Full registration includes lectures and tours, or just visit the orchid show with general admission. *For more information, see 19woc.com.*

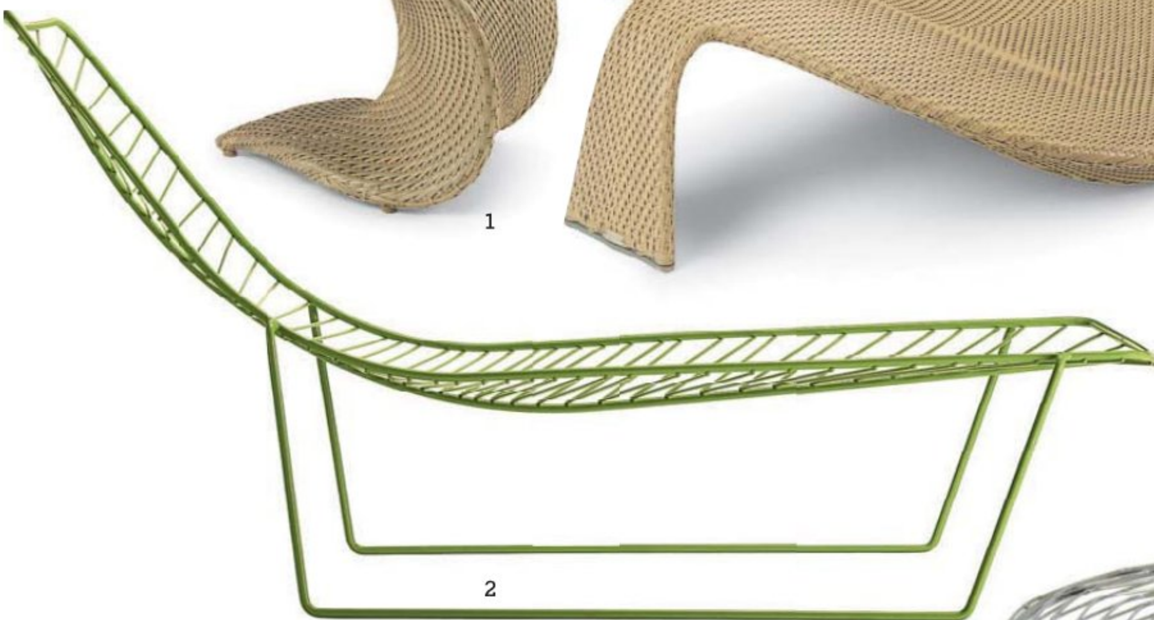
■ GARDEN PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2008 COMPETITION

Deadline Jan. 31 Whether you're a seasoned garden photographer or a gifted amateur, here's your chance to take the spotlight. In addition to cash and prizes, finalists will be on display from May to September 2008 in a special exhibition at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, near London. The call for entries falls into the following categories: My Garden, Garden Views, Plant Portraits, Life in the Garden and Trees. Entries can be single images or portfolios (themed or collections of individual photos). There is also a special category for Young Garden Photographer of the Year for shutterbugs under the age of 16. *For more information, see www.gpoty.org.*

TOP TO BOTTOM: COURTESY BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN; JOHN MICHAEL KOHLER ARTS CENTER ARTIST ARCHIVES



1



2



3



4

furniture

New Leaf

Playful yet elegant, these foliage-inspired collections turn nature into modern art

[1] DEDON LEAF Even without its sleek functionality, this leaf chaise has the dramatic appeal of sculpture. Designed by Frank Ligthart for Dedon. Made of Hularo fiber in sea grass or java with a back-friendly scoop down the center. Available in two sizes, single ($3,464) or double ($4,986); side table ($681). For information on purchasing, contact JANUS et Cie: 800-245-2687, janusetcie.com.

[2] LEAF CHAISE LONGUE Like the elegant veining of leaves, this foliage-inspired chaise is part of a series created by Barcelona design firm Lievore Altherr Molina. Made of steel and finished with polished chrome or painted in weather-resistant green, white or mocha. Series includes lounge chair, chaise longue and stackable chair. Available from Suite New York: 212-421-3300, suiteny.com; and Orange Skin: 312-335-1033, orangeskin.com. Call for pricing.

[3] LEAF CHAIR Fanciful garden chair from Atuto with leafy legs and a back and seat reminiscent of the concentric petals of a rose. Stainless steel with a clear powder-coat finish. From Goods for the Garden: $159; 800-663-3158, goodsforthegarden.com.

[4] LILI CHAIR Also from Atuto, the Lili Collection was inspired by the simple, classic form of a water lily leaf. The Lili chair adds a touch of modernism to its whimsical asymmetry. A companion Lili stand (21, 24 or 28 inches high) can hold favorite potted plants. Powder-coated recycled iron in green. Chair suggested retail $200; stand suggested retail $60 to $70, depending on size. Available from Goods for the Garden: 800-663-3158, goodsforthegarden.com.

JON WHITTLE (2)


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1

backyards spa style

With water an integral part of garden design, Sundance® Spas hot tubs are capturing center stage in the backyard.

THE MODERN SPA IS FINDING A NEW HOME IN THE HEART OF THE GARDEN. For outdoor decorators who delight in the sensory allure of moving water in a landscape, a spa is a natural addition. The visual impact of water is undeniable – a spa reflecting sunlight in a leafy alcove; a sparkling hot tub surrounded by blooming plants. The mist rising from the warm water of a hot tub is an invitation to enjoy the relaxing, therapeutic benefits of a hydromassage. And now, with Sundance Spas offering features like lighted waterfalls, and more options in coordinating spa accessories, it's easier than ever to integrate the beauty of moving water into your backyard environment.

Spas come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes and colors. As a first step, measure the space where you envision your spa, and imagine the overall look and feel for the area. A portable spa can be partially sunken into a stone, wood or brick deck for a customized look. Tuck your spa into a secluded corner, or set it up on a patio with coordinating bars and stools for entertaining. Gazebos and screens from Backyards by Sundance provide shelter from the elements, a place to hang seasonal plants, and the privacy of an "outdoor room."

1 In an area large enough for entertaining, this corner location also offers privacy.

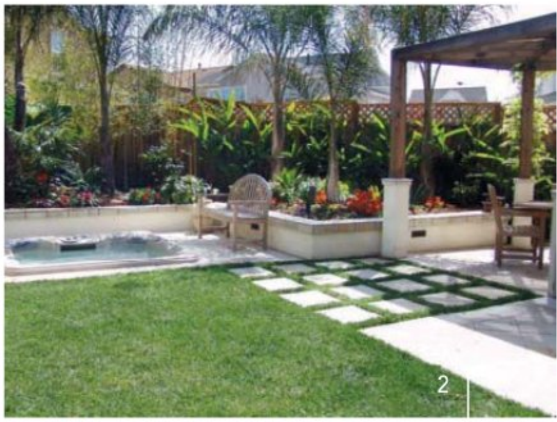
2 An in-ground spa becomes a garden oasis.

3 A wide, stone stairway showcases this Sundance hot tub, and makes it easy to access the verdant, secluded location.

4 A matching gazebo creates an outdoor-room effect.

5 Flowering plants, hedges and trees form a natural spa retreat.

6 You can add matching steps, surrounds, stools, and other accessories to any Sundance Spas hot tub.


2


3



A waterfall, backlit with color on a starry night, adds an element of drama. The AquaTerrace™ and AquaSheer™ waterfalls in hot tubs by Sundance Spas operate independently of the spa's jets, so you can enjoy the sight and sound of cascading water even when you're not using the hot tub.

Keep in mind that a portable Sundance hot tub is quite simple to set up. More importantly, thanks to advanced water purification systems and an emphasis on energy-saving features, a Sundance is easy to care for, with minimal operating costs.

Whether it's the focal point of a landscape, or a subtle way to integrate the beauty of moving water into the environment, a portable spa will add style, and livability, to your backyard.









Sword Play

Boldly architectural and wickedly beautiful, agaves combine subtle colors and in-your-face forms

AS WATER RESOURCES BECOME STRETCHED AND GARDENERS RECONSIDER THEIR WATER-guzzling landscapes, succulents offer an ideal solution. Agaves bring the added benefits of drama and structure as well as texture and subtle color. Native to the southern United States, Mexico, the Caribbean and northern South America, agaves grow best in the Southwest and Mediterranean climates, but are adaptable and can also be grown out of their zones in pots if given winter protection. Used primarily for their startling leaf artistry, agaves also eventually flower, though blooming signals the end of the plant's life cycle, when they depart in a blaze of glory with a tall spike or enormous, treelike branched stalk. —**GARY LYONS**, DESERT GARDEN CURATOR, HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARB RIES

AGAVE VICTORIAE-REGINAE **The Queen Victoria agave is less than two feet across, perfect for a pot, with striking leaves edged in white. Very slow growing it can take 40 years to bloom. Purchase an older plant to enjoy its mature years. Hardy to 10 degrees F.**

Appeal: Their leaf symmetry is eye-catching; their thorns are repelling, yet beautiful to behold. Some have prickly-edged leaves, the inner ones leaving imprints on the surface of the outer leaves and vice versa. Others display curious markings, wispy, curled threads or undulating striped leaves. Agaves are among the best choices for a long-lived patio plant — they can go without water for weeks, even months. They are also considered fire-retardant.

Zones: Generally agaves thrive in the warmer subtropical zones that experience seasonal dry periods (Zones 8 to 10). A few species native to the southwest United States and northern Mexico tolerate more extreme heat and cold; *Agave parryi* will tolerate minus 20 degrees F (Zone 5). The best region for growing the most



AGAVE GENTRYI* X *A. MONTANA A hybrid between *A. gentryi*, which is compact with rounded leaves and reddish (very sharp) spines, and *A. montana*, which is variable but generally has longer, narrower leaves. The two species overlap habitats in Mexico and can naturally hybridize. Shown here is the artistic leaf imprinting at the shoot apex's bud cone.

Photos taken at the Ruth Bancroft Garden in Walnut Creek, California.



1



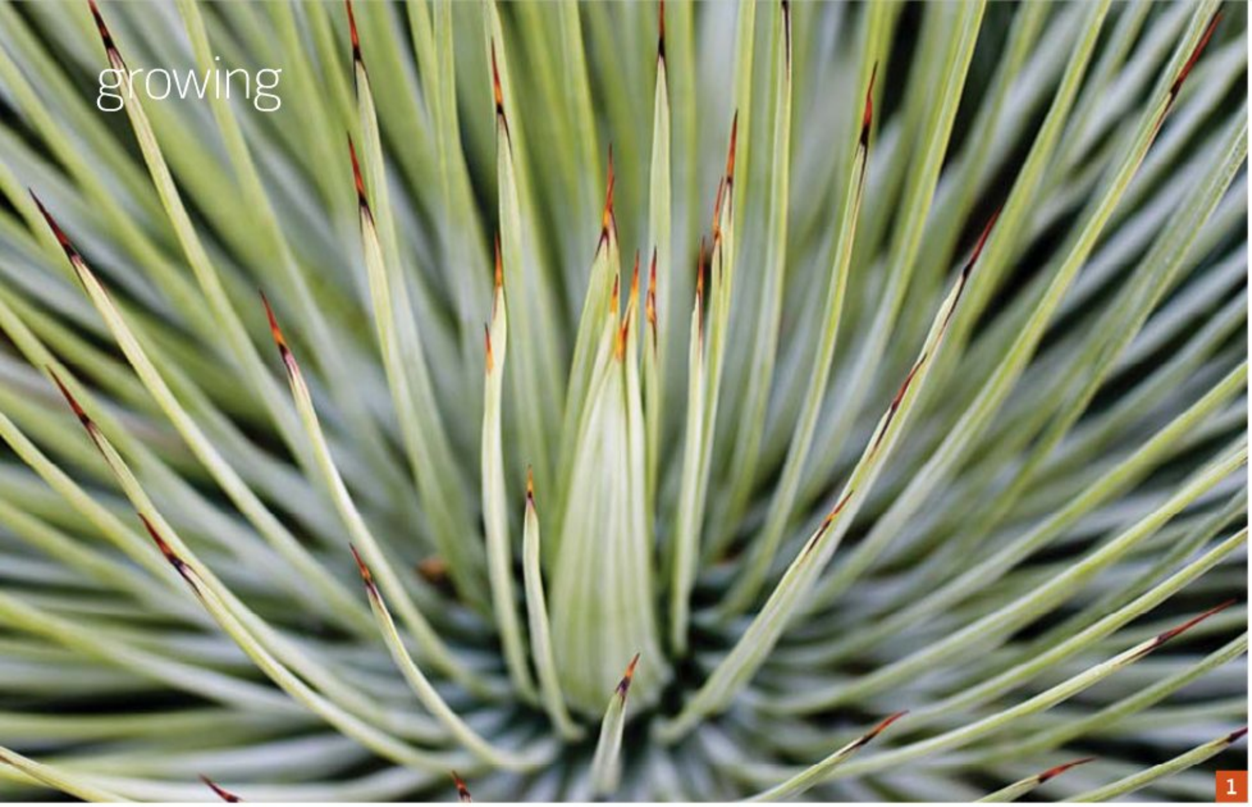
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3

[1] ***AGAVE PARRYI VAR. TRUNCATA*** One of the nicest agaves for the landscape. Its striking artichoke-like, blue-gray rosettes and clumping habit earn it a prominent spot in the garden. Grows two to three feet tall and three to four feet across. If kept dry, it will tolerate 15 degrees F.
[2] ***AGAVE LEOPOLDII*** A dwarf agave best used in a container. If planted in the ground, it will form a clumping mound over three feet across. Noted for its wispy curled fibers that decorate the leaf margins. Hardy in Zones 9 to 10.
[3] ***AGAVE AMERICANA 'VARIEGATA'*** Since the 19th century, a popular garden plant in Southern California, with creamy golden stripes down the length of the foliage. Its thick guttered six- to eight-foot-long leaves make it a whopper of a specimen up to 12 feet across. Size can be greatly reduced if it's kept in a container. As with many other variegated agaves, it needs protection from sun during the hottest part of the day, especially in desert areas. Hardy to Zone 8.

types is the Mediterranean climate areas of California. However, many species will thrive in the desert Southwest. In cold or wet areas elsewhere, some species can be grown if kept dry and well above zero in the winter.
Exposure: Agaves are sun worshippers, though light shade for a couple of hours is acceptable.
Soil: Agaves are very adaptable. Soils low in clay content are fine. Texture can be sandy or rocky. In areas with substantial rainfall, a well-drained soil is necessary.
Care: Plant or transplant in spring and early fall, giving larger species plenty of room to attain maximum size. Make sure that no part of the leaf rosette is covered with soil, which can cause rotting. Until established, water once or twice a week. Protect small plants from summer sunburn and soft-leaved species from sunburn and frost with shade cloth. Overwatering may encourage fungal root rot. In California, heavy winter rains can cause small, even medium-sized, agaves to rot.







[1] ***AGAVE FALCATA*** Some may prefer this as a container plant. Its short, stiff yucca-like leaves have sharp terminal spines that can provide some unpleasant surprises for the unwary gardener. The narrow foliage provides a great texture, contrasting with bolder foliaged plants, including other agaves. Grows to 18 inches wide. Hardy to 15 degrees F.

[2] ***AGAVE MONTANA*** A solitary agave (it does not form offsets) recently discovered in Mexico, three to five feet tall and four to six feet wide. The chestnut brown marginal prickles contrasted against rich green leaves make it pleasing to view, especially in a location where there is backlighting. Hardy to 10 degrees F.

[3] ***AGAVE 'CORNELIUS'*** Possibly an aberrant form of the variegated *A. americana*. Also sold under the invalid and rather unwieldy name of *A. americana* 'Marginata Aurea Monstrosa'. Planted in the ground, it will grow to two feet across and 18 inches tall, but will be somewhat smaller in a container. Very slow growing, so try to purchase a larger, older specimen. Hardy to 25 degrees F.

designing with agaves ■ Agaves are great accents used with low groundcovers, such as blue kleinia (*Senecio mandraliscae*) and sedums. ■ Along with aloe and opuntia cactus, agaves add structure to the Mediterranean or the drought-tolerant garden, with the added benefit of being fire-resistant. ■ Large agaves are strong background plants, planted with smaller, slower-growing species in the foreground, but not so close to walkways that they can cause injury to passersby. ■ Use one medium to large agave as a striking focal point in the ground or a container. ■ Types that readily form offsets make a beautiful mass planting, useful on a steep slope where watering is difficult.


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1



2

[1] THE QUARTZ SERIES: The latest collection from the heralded Phoenix-based Kornegay Design, these majestic, precast pots in a range of gemstone-inspired hues weigh up to 740 pounds, lending a durable architectonic presence to any landscape. From Kornegay Design, to the trade. Call 877-252-6323 or see kornegaydesign.com.

Praise the Pot

Dress it up, dress it down, the contemporary container can stand alone in style

ALTHOUGH ALMOST ANY PLANT, FROM TENDER PERENNIALS TO ORNAMENTAL vegetables, can find a home in a container for a season, some containers are born Greta Garbos and just want to be left alone — to express their own true form. From classic to cozy to contemporary, there is no end to the stories they can tell: Think of each as a succinct statement, taking dominion everywhere. That's just what architect Zaha Hadid must have known when she cast the half-sculpture/half-container "Flow" and shaped the essence of the contemporary garden ornament. This winter, as you get your jump on next year's garden, don't just think seeds; think containers. Some of the best new renditions are sampled here. — **DONNA DORIAN**

[2] FLOW: The first woman to win architecture's Nobel, the Pritzker Prize, the visionary Zaha Hadid challenges traditional spatial concepts with this sinuous polyethylene shape. In lacquered black or white. From Serrulunga: $3,450 to $8,100, depending on size. Call 203-855-9325 or see serralunga.com.

[3] THE LUANDA COLLECTION: Inspired by the structural beauty of tree roots, these terra-cotta pots developed by Belgian design firm Domani have an earthy, grainy texture reminiscent of a weathered tree trunk. From Winston Flowers: $900 to $4,000, depending on size. Call 800-457-4901 or see winstonflowers.com.

[4] COCONUT POT: Indoors in a foyer, outside by the pool or in a row along a path, this chocolate-colored, weather-resistant pot made from the trunk of a coconut tree doubles as sculpture. From Danao Outdoor: from $450 to $900, depending on size. Call 480-275-6442 or see danaooutdoor.com.



3



4


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5



6



7



8

[5] CHINESE PLANTER: Inspired by the French 18th-century Le Style Chinois, this treated wood planter box meets its match when set with rose standards or citrus trees. In traditional white and dark green. From Accents of France: $444 (plus $125 for optional metal liner). Call 323-653-4006 or see accentsoffrance.com.

[6] SCALLOPED LOW BOWL: With each petal shape catching moisture and encouraging moss, this artichoke-shaped cast-stone pot, a reproduction of a vintage American example, gets better as time goes by. From Inner Gardens: $625. Call 310-838-8378 or see innergardens.com.

[7] VASO NEKUMA: From the renowned Florentine pottery studio of Francesco Del Re, this contemporary terra-cotta masterpiece navigates the idioms of classical and modern design. In natural, blue, metallic and gray. From Eye of the Day: from $796, depending on color. Call 805-566-0778 or see eyeofthedaygdc.com.

[8] MULHOLLAND PLANTER: Like the perfect little black dress, this classic planter fashioned by the Los Angeles-based landscape team KeswickRobbins goes a long way toward articulating the essence of contemporary chic. Available in aluminum, painted mahogany, natural mahogany or teak. From Hollyhock: from $2,300. Call 310-777-0100 or see keswickrobbins.com.

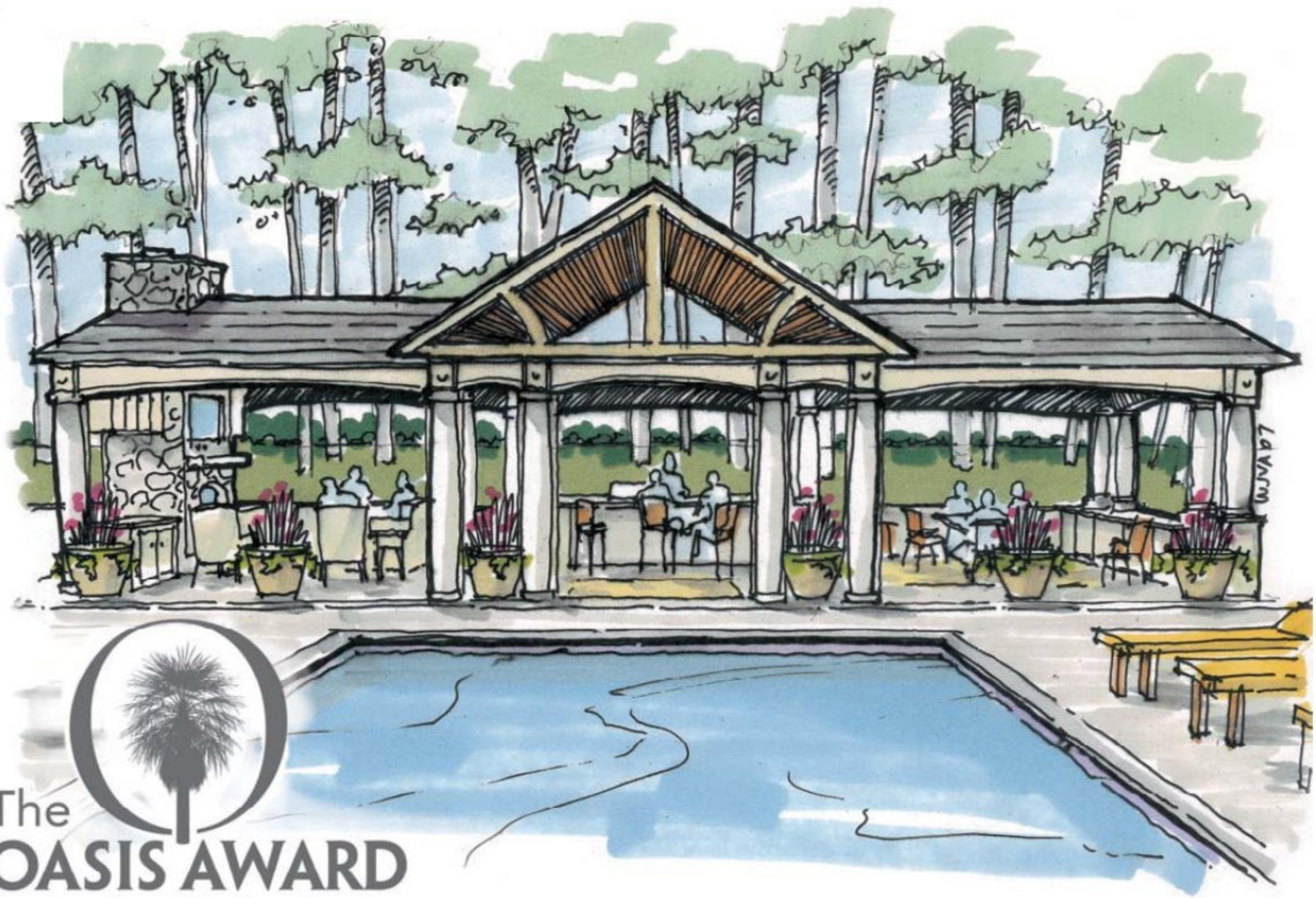
TOP RIGHT: MICHAEL KRAUS











The OASIS AWARD for Outdoor Kitchen Design

All That and Then Some –

A private Virginia retreat for outdoor cooking, dining and entertaining



Jon van Allen

2007 Oasis Award Winner

When our Oasis Award judges viewed the winning entry from Jon van Allen of McHale Landscape Design in Vienna, Virginia, the response was unanimous: This is an inviting space that makes you want to spend time outside.

"He created a room that's usable many months out of the year," said landscape architect and chef J'Nell Bryson. And Pete Georgiadis of Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet commented, "The space is a perfect retreat, balancing the formal style of the home with a casual and inviting atmosphere."

The project, in Great Falls, Virginia, is located in a region that has long been an attraction for those who love the outdoors. Nearby Great Falls Park is filled with natural wonders enjoyed by hikers and day-trippers. River

East Coast Pool Pavilion

Well-appointed outdoor kitchens are becoming popular in all climates. The above concept is designed for a milder climate in Virginia with screens and outdoor heaters to extend the entertaining season.



Unity

While the outdoor kitchen is separate from the house, the design implements materials and similar colors to create a sense of continuity between the two spaces.



Site Plan

The pavilion is on axis with the house and pool. The symmetry of the pavilion extends to the footprint of the formal garden to one side and the activity areas to the other. The site plan draws people from the house to the pavilion.

Bend County Park and the Village Green also host locals and visitors on lazy Saturdays and festivals that mark the seasons.

Van Allen's clients won't have to go farther than their own backyard to experience nature at its finest, where an amenity-packed outdoor cooking and dining pavilion awaits. Constructed out of pressure-treated lumber concealed with veneer and designed with a dark gray slate roof to pair with a Georgian colonial house, the pavilion is situated on a five-acre parcel surrounded by rolling hills and woodlands.

"My clients asked for an outdoor kitchen completely separate from the house, roofed and screened, complete with a fireplace, flat-screen television, dining and informal seating area," says van Allen. Clearly, they got everything they asked for and more.

The pavilion is on axis with the house and pool, and while it in no way clashes with the formality of the architecture, "It was the client's desire to relate to the home architecturally but be a bit more relaxed in layout and finishes," says van Allen.

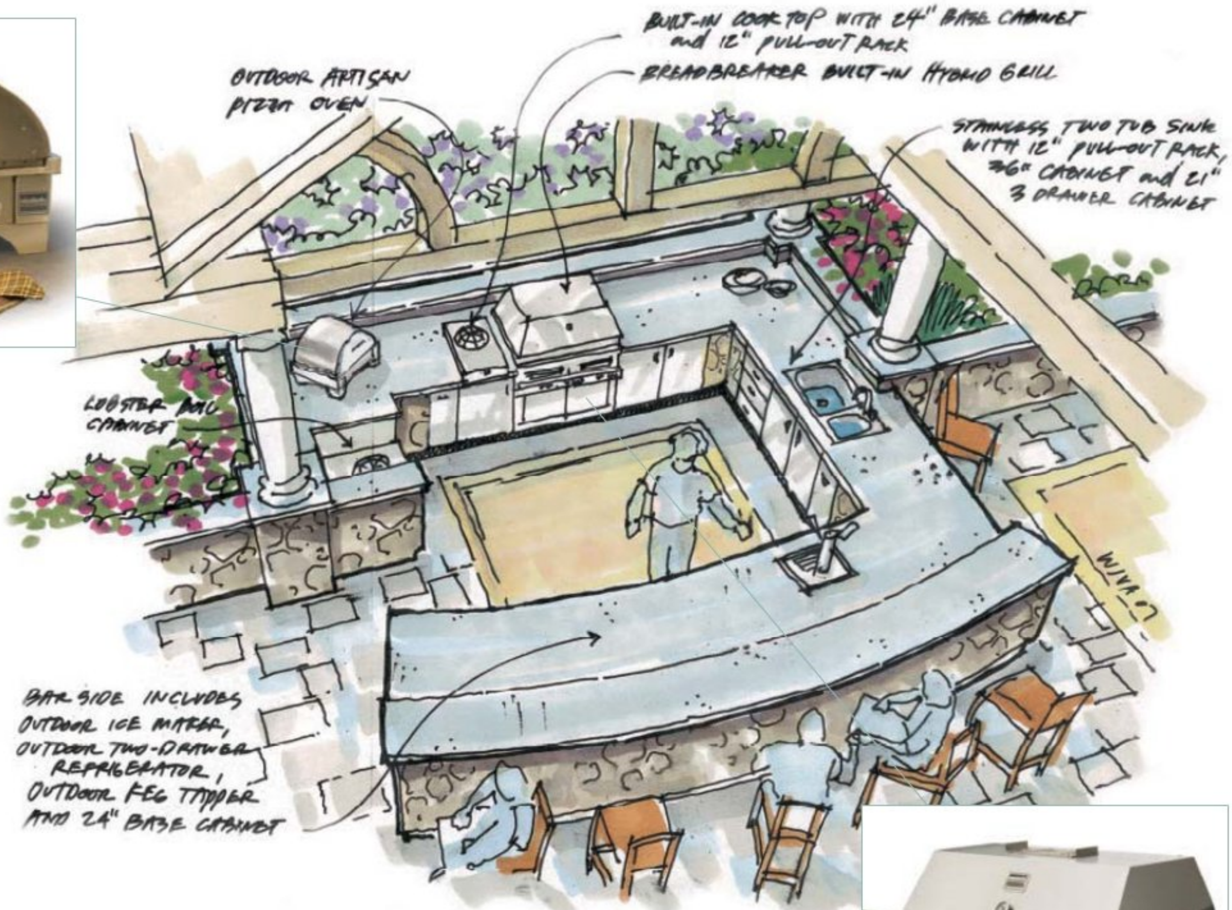
The kitchen is completely self-sufficient: no running back to the house for last-minute fixings. Outfitted with Kalamazoo's Custom Outdoor Kitchen Collection, the space includes their flagship charcoal, wood and gas hybrid grill with other top-of-the-line equipment such as the two-drawer

2007 Oasis Award for Outdoor Kitchen Design



Artisan Pizza Oven

The stone in this oven delivers superior heat transfer characteristics and the low, arched top reflects radiant heat back to the pizza for even baking from both the top and bottom.



Complete Kitchen

The kitchen is full of amenities any chef would appreciate, and the layout keeps the cook engaged in the party.

refrigerator, lobster boiler, keg tapper, ice maker, wok cook-top and pizza oven. The kitchen also uses Kalamazoo's stainless steel cabinetry for maintenance-free storage.

"The outdoor kitchen is a destination in itself," said *Garden Design's* editor-in-chief Bill Marken.

A formal dining area complements the kitchen, and a comfortable seating area opposite the dining area gets cozy by the fireplace. Two Kalamazoo outdoor wine chillers (one for white varietals, one for red) in the dining area buffet offer easy access while entertaining. Outdoor rugs, fine furnishings, heat lamps and ceiling fans — every detail has been attended to. Underfoot, Pennsylvania flagstone set in a random Ashlar pattern brings the richness and warmth that only stone's natural gradations can.

The full range of accoutrements transforms the pavilion into the ultimate party pad. "I can see my clients using the space so many different ways," says van Allen. "They can have a romantic dinner by the fireplace, smoke cigars with the boys and watch a game, watch the derby while sipping on mint juleps, have friends over for a formal dinner or just throw some dogs on the grill and pizzas in the oven for a kid's birthday party."

So many living spaces could have led to a monolithic project that takes over the site, but as designer Sandy Koepke noticed, "Jon did a nice job with scale. It is a large space to design with, but he made it work."



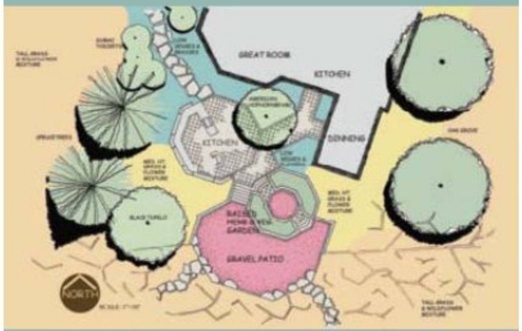


Built-In Hybrid Grill

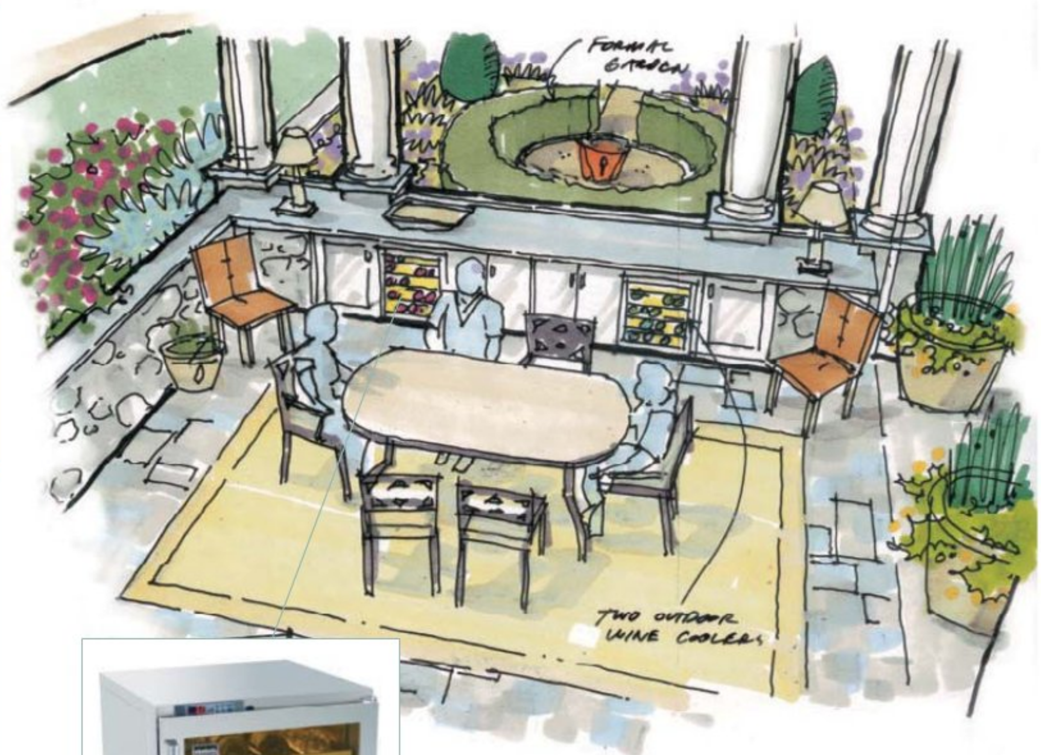
Every outdoor cooking technique is at your disposal with 100,000 BTUs of main burner power and the revolutionary hybrid grilling drawer system (below) that enables cooking with any combination of charcoal, wood and gas. The deep-hopper cookbox design eliminates the hassles of cleaning the grill, making the outdoor kitchen all the more enjoyable.



Honorable Mention



Pod-tastic: Graduate student Michael Garrett of Champaign, Illinois, designed a cluster of outdoor spaces that opens up to the natural space beyond it. "Imagine if Midwestern suburban living was transformed into a panorama of prairie and savannah landscapes," he noted in his entry. With an outdoor kitchen at its core and an herb garden within easy reach, "It has a nice overall layout composed of pods that encourages movement from space to space," said Bill Marken.





Kalamazoo Outdoor Wine Chiller

Features vinyl coated full-extension shelving that prevents shifting and slippage of the stored bottles; and glass doors that protect varietals from ultraviolet light while displaying the contents of the undercounter wine storage cabinets in all their beauty. Each 24" unit shown above can hold up to 42 bottles of your favorite varietals.

Enter your original concepts in 2008

The 2007 Oasis Awards delved into the ever-growing and relatively young field of outdoor kitchen design. Thanks go to the judges for this year's competition: Bill Marken, editor-in-chief for *Garden Design*; Sandy Koepke, interior designer and outdoor room specialist; J'Nell Bryson, landscape architect; and Pete Georgiadis, president of Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet. To enter next year's Oasis Awards, submit a conceptual design for an exterior residential room appointed with pieces from Kalamazoo's Custom Outdoor Kitchen Collection. Visit www.OasisAward.com to view details on next year's Oasis Award entry process. The winner(s) will be recognized in several ways including: announcement in the October/November ASLA Residential Awards issue of *Garden Design* magazine, exposure through *Garden Design* at the 2008 ASLA conference, a feature on www.KalamazooGourmet.com and a feature on gardendesign.com

The OASIS AWARD for Outdoor Kitchen Design

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GARDEN DESIGN

GARDEN DESIGN HOLIDAY *gift guide*



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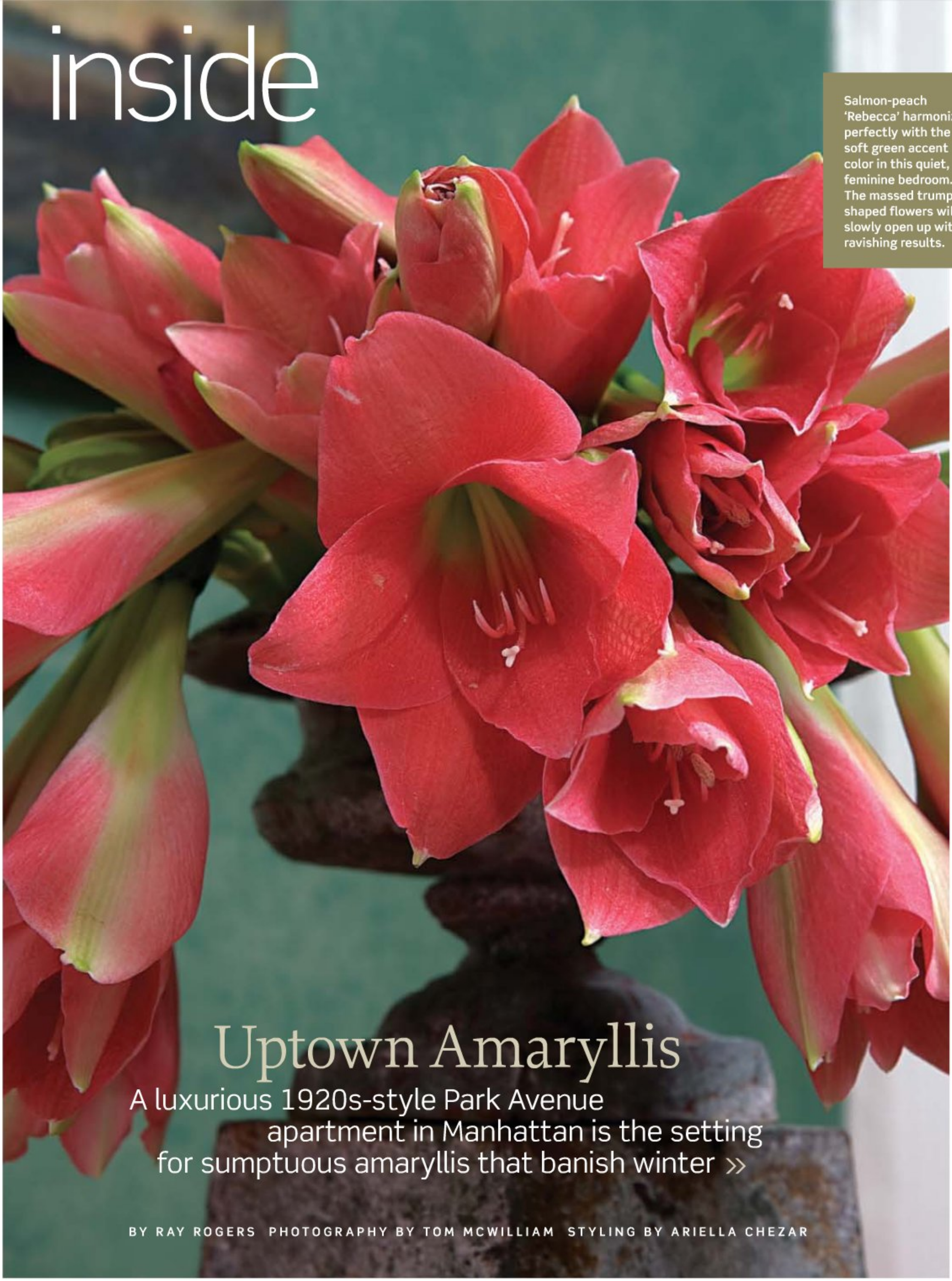


Rachel Tribble

Described as "stunning" and "emotionally calming", Rachel's work hangs on the walls of some of the finest homes internationally. Original paintings, limited edition giclee prints and commissioned work.

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inside

Salmon-peach 'Rebecca' harmonizes perfectly with the soft green accent color in this quiet, feminine bedroom. The massed trumpet-shaped flowers will slowly open up with ravishing results.

Uptown Amaryllis

A luxurious 1920s-style Park Avenue apartment in Manhattan is the setting for sumptuous amaryllis that banish winter »

BY RAY ROGERS PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM MCWILLIAM STYLING BY ARIELLA CHEZAR



to the wings. Flamboyant yet subtle, amaryllis or Hippeastrum, a South American genus of about 80 species and hybrids, provide indoor cheer while the outside world remains in the gray grip of winter. Whether grown from their hefty bulbs or bought as cut stems from a florist, amaryllis offer rich and delicate colors and a surprising range of forms to inspire the decorator in all of us. Growing amaryllis from bulbs is easy if you keep their most important needs in mind: plenty of water after the stems begin to elongate, a warm spot until they bloom, and lots of sun. Unless you want to keep them going for another round of blooming next year, leave the fertilizer on the shelf. Expert grower Ray Rogers has won many blue ribbons for his amaryllis at the Philadelphia Flower Show and has some excellent growing tips. Floral designer Ariella Chezar shows how to create big impact using colors and forms in simple, dynamic combinations.

■ *For mail-order amaryllis bulbs, visit vanengelen.com or johnscheepers.com.*





From left to right: The cybister group of hybrids may bloom quickly on short stems, lending themselves to clever staging. Small plants of 'Ruby Meyer' and 'Emerald' suggest exquisite petits fours. The florist's frogs holding the bulbs in place are covered by moss.

The glamorous giant red flowers of 'Royal Velvet'.

'Charisma' bulbs begun in plastic pots were combined into one moss-covered display in a beautifully weathered Campo De' Fiori terra-cotta bowl. The flowers command attention with their intriguing and variable "spray-painted" patterns of raspberry on white. Be patient: 'Charisma' can take 12 weeks to reach full bloom.

From left to right: Pastel amaryllis, including 'Exotica', evoke a tranquil mood and suit contemporary interiors in sophisticated neutrals. Ariella Chezar used purple leaves of New Zealand flax as an accent, with a gray-blue echeveria set under the glass base of the vase.

Large-flowered bicolors, such as 'Exception', have twice the appeal of solid-colored blooms and take center stage when combined with a few other equally dramatic materials like split-leaf philodendron leaves and long whips of willow.

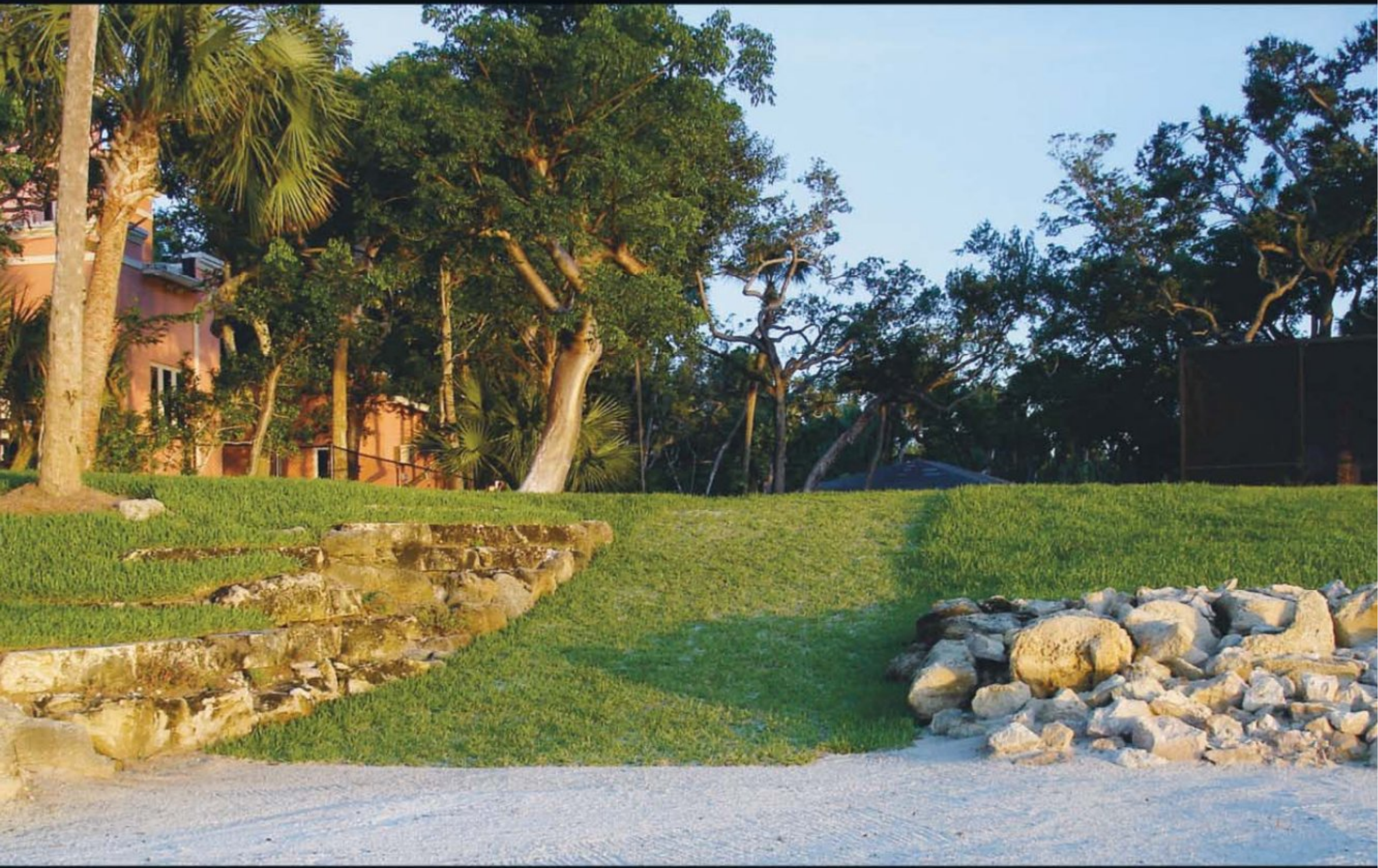
Spidery cybister types, such as 'La Paz' or 'Emerald', add a much lighter touch than their large-flowered cousins. 'Mont Blanc' in the center provides a subtle foil for the lively bunches of 'La Paz' on either side.

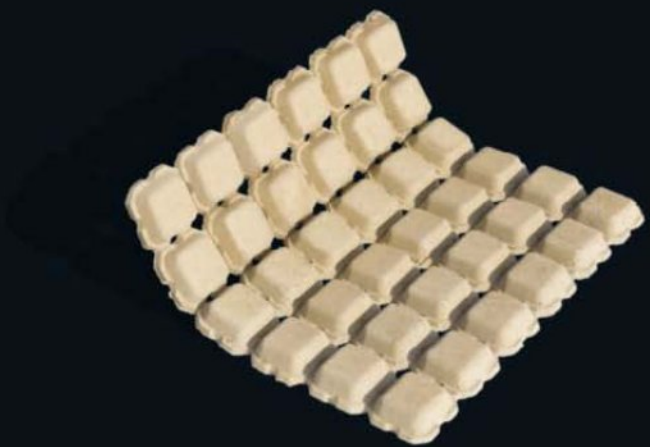




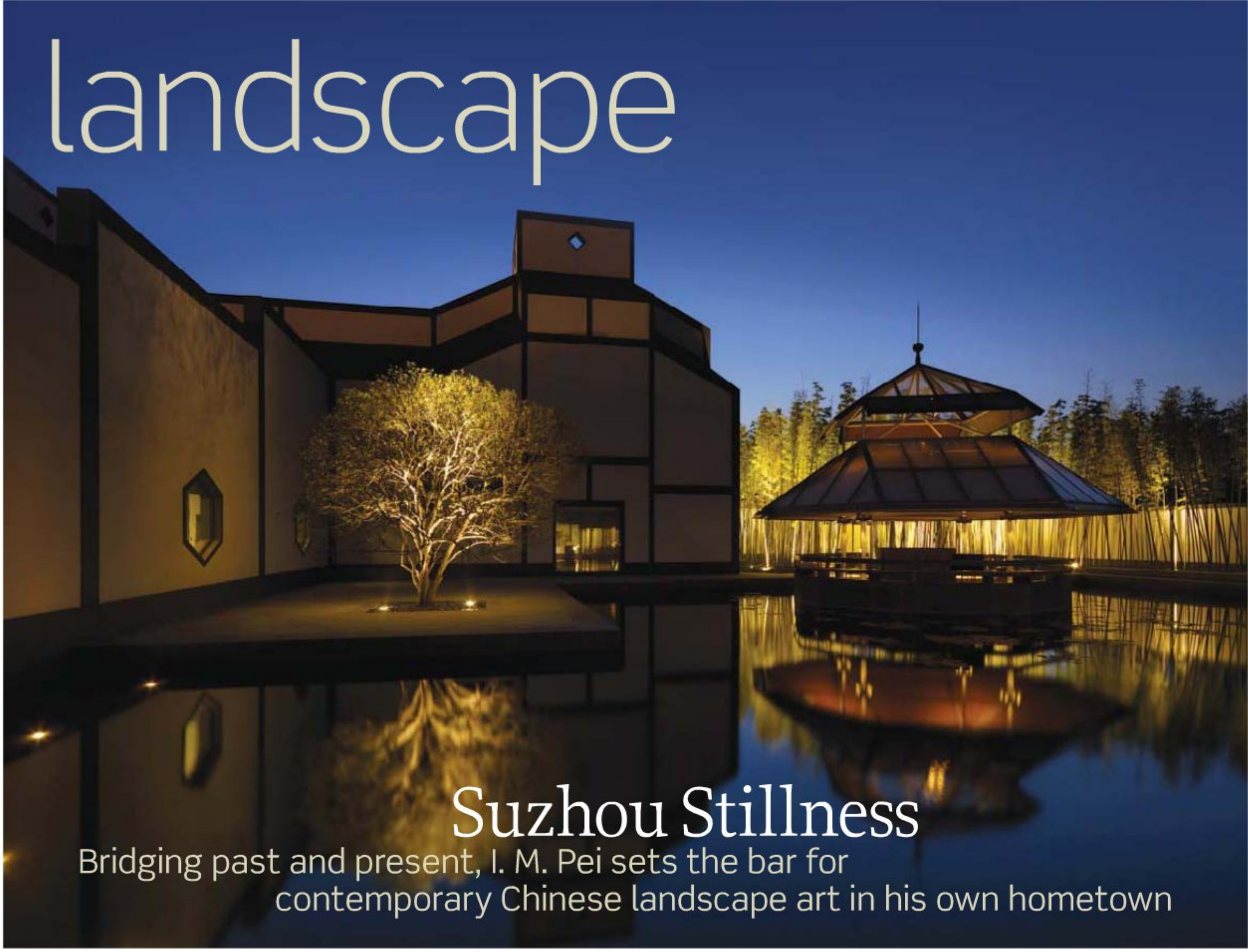


success with amaryllis ■ Use a pot no more than two or three inches wider than the bulb, and make sure half of the bulb sits above the potting mix (any good mix containing peat, bark and coconut fiber is fine). Water well at planting and then wait until the buds start to rise up before watering again. ■ Believe it or not, an amaryllis with a full head of steam can easily grow an inch or more each day. Keep bamboo stakes and raffia handy for the tall ones, especially varieties that produce flowers six inches or more across. ■ As flowers begin to open, you can prolong their beauty by moving the pot into a cooler spot, at least at night. They will tolerate temperatures in the low 40s. ■ Cut stems of amaryllis last a week, sometimes longer, if the bottom inch or so is neatly cut off with a sharp knife before plunging the stems into a tall container filled with water almost hot to the touch. Let the water cool for a few hours or overnight before arranging. ■ Re-cutting the stems every three to four days and placing them in fresh hot water prolongs the life of the flowers, as does keeping them in a cool or cold location at night.





landscape



KERUN IP

Suzhou Stillness

Bridging past and present, I. M. Pei sets the bar for contemporary Chinese landscape art in his own hometown

IN ACCEPTING A COMMISSION IN 2002 FOR A contemporary museum in Suzhou, a modern city in the Yangtze River basin with ancient roots stretching back 2,500 years, the renowned architect I. M. Pei returned to his family's ancestral hometown. The commission allowed Pei, working in conjunction with Pei Partnership Architects (which includes his two sons), to design buildings and gardens for the present while recalling the history of a great city. And as Pei points out, the relationship between past and present looms large for the Chinese people.

Above: Night view of a fragrant Osmanthus, in bloom for the Suzhou Museum's opening, echoing the form of the nearby tea pavilion. Both are sited in the central courtyard area.

The city's history represents the apogee of Chinese garden art. Although severely compromised by growth (current population is estimated at 6 million persons), the canal-encircled city formerly known as Soochow, on the edge of Lake Tai, is still rich in classical Chinese gardens. In this center of commerce and silk culture, home to Chinese scholars and courtiers removed from the demands of the capital, the hyper-refined and wealthy inhabitants built more than 200 walled gardens that must have prompted an old Chinese proverb, "In heaven, there is paradise. On earth, there are Suzhou and Hangzhou." Numerous classical Chinese gardens (69 of them) remain in the historic city core, some of them cited as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Four gardens received particular attention, including the Lion Grove Garden (1342), which remained in Pei's family until 1949, and the Garden of the Humble Administrator (built in 1509, then renovated and changed in the 1950s), which abuts the Humble Administrator's Garden.

The affiliation of the prominent architect Pei with the new Suzhou Museum drew international attention from the day of its announcement. In recognition of the museum's importance, five academicians from Beijing met with Pei to discuss historic building materials and coloration. Pei pressed for a contemporary design for new structures but with requisite sensitivity to the site. To house works of art, he devised a two-story walled building that mimics the pavilion-like layout typical in the city, arranged around open courtyard gardens.

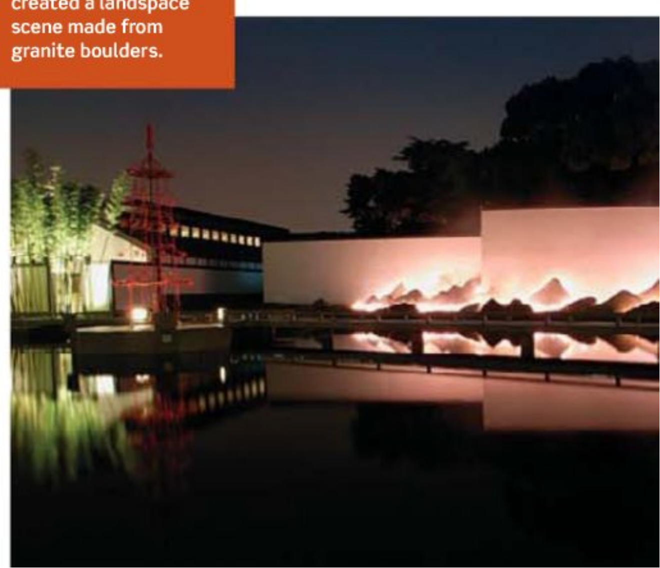
The pivotal location could have overwhelmed both building and garden. So, rather than rely on literal-minded landscape historians to mimic earlier landscape designs, Pei suggested specific ideas to complement his new building. "To make a Chinese garden," he states, "you only need three materials — water, rocks and nature." Other great Suzhou gardens had combined those elements in elaborate ways, including twisting pathways, low bridges with multiple perspectives, changes in elevation and viewing pavilions that offer constantly changing

vistas. In contrast, Pei looked back to a simpler period, more attuned to the Ming Dynasty (A.D. 1368-1644), when simplicity and openness echoed the Taoist philosophy.

Designing the garden for today gave Pei some practical challenges. Unlike the ancient idealized vision of a garden as respite for a lone scholar or as the private haunt of the privileged, the Suzhou Museum would be visited by many thousands of people annually. Large crowds required an expanded scale and pared-down elements with open space for celebrations. Pei and Pei Partnership Architects rethought the familiar approach, particularly the use of stone.

Traditionally, rock gardens form a central element in most Suzhou gardens, a design component that represents the masculine "yang" principle. Whereas garden designers in the past had imported immense rocks with an eroded, sculptural character — a time-consuming process — Pei improvised a solution. Inspired by the painter Mi Fu (A.D. 1051-1107), Pei instructed his supervising architect Bing Lin to scour a remote Chinese province for large granite boulders, which were sliced by wire saw and shipped to Suzhou. They were rearranged against the garden walls and flamed to give them color gradations and depth perspective. The public immediately accepted this contemporary intervention.

Water, rock's complement, represents the feminine "yin." In the central courtyard, the architect devised an open space with a large pool. Today, schools of carp swim within water that is crisscrossed by a low stone bridge leading to a small, stylized pavilion. As with the designs of gardens at older sites, the pavilion is customary, and intended



Celebrating the opening of the Suzhou Museum on October 7, 2006, gunpowder-fuse wire lit up a wall where Pei created a landspace scene made from granite boulders.

TATSUMI MASATOSHI/COURTESY CAI STUDIO

to be used for conversation and rest, and for the drinking of tea during the day and wine at night. The water in the pool artfully skims over museum spaces, which are located a full story underground.

A limited, selective palette defines plant material throughout. Most obviously, bamboo punctuates the inner courtyard — a variety locally called Wu Ya bamboo (*Phyllostachys atrovaginata*). Lotus was selected for the soft yellow flowers that harmonize with the prevailing gray and white palette.

Though most Chinese pay little attention to trees placed in new construction sites, the Suzhou gardens acquired mature specimens, a necessity given the museum's opening in October 2006. For fragrance, the designers specified osmanthus or fragrant olive (*Osmanthus fragrans*), common in Suzhou, because its flowering time would coincide with the opening of the museum. Some trees installed in the gardens came from the region around Suzhou, such as apricot; others, like pines, came from throughout China.

Trees mark other courtyards that open off interior galleries and public spaces, connecting the galleries and providing natural light. In one case, off a room devoted to the artifacts of a Ming scholar, a plum tree set against a wall in a tiny outdoor courtyard creates a picturesque view.

While markedly more restrained than the contemplative open spaces honed by Japanese garden designers, and more austere than the earlier Chinese gardens in Suzhou, the gardens at the Suzhou Museum reflect Chinese cultural traditions in contemporary idiom. As the Chinese-garden expert Maggie Keswick pointed out in her seminal work, *The Chinese Garden*, "In England and America we plant a garden, but a Chinese garden is built." For I. M. Pei and his associates, building a garden included constructing a museum, and unifying indoors and outdoors into a seamless experience, where water, rocks and plants create a sheltered place of fragrance, light and rest. Pei's hope was that the ensemble would serve as a model for a new generation of Chinese design. "Suzhou is the place to do it!" Pei exclaims. — **ROBERT IVY**

■ *Robert Ivy is the editor in chief of* Architectural Record *and editorial director of McGraw-Hill Construction's media group, which publishes* Architectural Record: China.

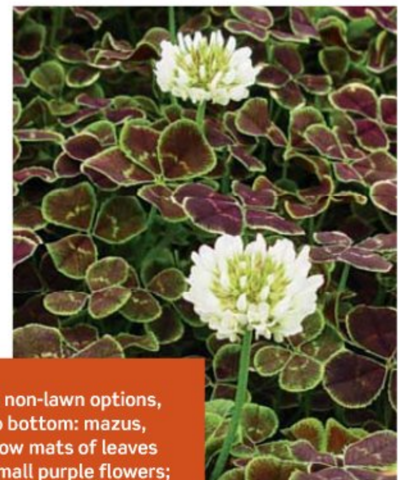
Instead of Lawn?

The push is on for wise alternatives to thirsty, hungry, high-maintenance turf



MY LAWN IS IN PRETTY SAD SHAPE. A MIDSUMMER drought and compacted urban soil conspired to create something less than the American dream. The grasses, the foundation of most lawns, are tan, either dormant or dead, and various non-grasses — some would say weeds — have begun to colonize the bare patches. I need to replace the lawn, but with what? Fresh sod rolled out in grassy perfection? Or something else — something more eco-friendly?

By most accounts, the American lawn idea was imported from cool, damp Great Britain with the early colonists. For many years the well-manicured greenscape was mostly the domain of the well-to-do. But the invention of the lawnmower in the 1830s began a shift that moved further still with the advent of the power mower in the 1930s. After World War II the development of the suburbs and aggressive marketing by the lawn-care industry solidified the lawn's place in our national psyche. The only problem was this: The United States is a lot more ecologically diverse and generally a lot hotter and drier than Britain. Lawn — and by that I mean the grass-based, short-clipped, monoculture lawn — doesn't really grow that well in many parts of our country. And so we must maintain lawn to the max — with lots of water, lots of fertilizer, lots of pesticides and lots of mowing. According to the recent lawn-care exposé *American Green: The Obsessive Quest for the Perfect Lawn* by Ted Steinberg (W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), depending on the area of the country, a mere 1,000-square-foot lawn needs between 10,000 and 37,000 gallons of water per year to stay green, and is typically dosed with more herbicide per acre than farmers use to grow crops. Throw in the fossil fuels needed for





Three non-lawn options, top to bottom: mazus, with low mats of leaves and small purple flowers; bronze-leaved form of nitrogen-fixing Dutch white clover; soft, fragrant foliage of thyme overflowing its bounds.

TOP TO BOTTOM: STEPABLES* (2); ANDREA JONES

sod transport and fertilizer manufacture, and I am becoming a little apprehensive about replacing my dead backyard with new non-native turf. So I am looking at alternatives.

First, a reality check:

- There's really nothing quite like lawn grass for delivering a versatile surface that has the look we expect from a lawn and that can be used both as groundcover and play surface — try playing croquet on liriope sometime.
- Local climate needs to be considered carefully, as well as sun/shade. It's a lot easier to specify lawn grasses for many sections of the country (for example, bluegrass will survive in much of the northern half of the United States) than to choose lawn replacements.
- I know I want living things to replace my lawn. There are many hardscape, gravel, mulch and other low-maintenance alternatives, but not for my garden now (or for this column).

Most alternatives to traditional lawns come with their own baggage. For instance, buffalo grass is a native sod-former that looks like turf grass, but requires less water and fewer mowings. A warm-season type of grass, it will be green in midsummer — but it will go dormant when cool fall hits, and it won't green up right away in the spring. It is useful mostly in low-impact areas and does best in climates with low rainfall.

If you're willing to give up the look and functionality of grass, consider low-growing perennials that will stay green all summer. Dutch white clover (*Trifolium repens*) fixes its own soil nitrogen, all but removing the need for fertilizer — but it doesn't stand high traffic and shouldn't be used for playing surfaces. A company called Stepables (stepables.com) markets plants that can be walked on, like a lawn; their website has a handy plant selector that lets you search for plants with certain uses, zone hardiness, height, shade tolerance and other attributes. A few of my favorites that make appearances here are creeping thymes and pussytoes (native in the Southeast and Midwest). Leptinella, mazus, scotch moss, sedums and golden creeping jenny also make tight mats of small leaves.

If you can't decide on one species (or want to hedge your bets to see what works), consider a casual mixed planting, or "freedom lawn." Described in *Redesigning the American Lawn: A*

Search for Environmental Harmony by F. Herbert Bormann and others (Yale University Press, 2001) as a mown green lawn comprised of turf species and whatever else might blow in, a freedom lawn can be home to grasses, dandelions, violets, clover, plantain, crabgrass (yes, crabgrass) and other species considered anathema to the perfect lawn. The key to the freedom lawn is regular mowing to keep the greenery low — no dandelion flowers or seedheads. Though this mixed planting idea may require a paradigm shift and still requires that you rev up the mower, it won't need water or fertilizer where the mix is adapted to the climate. Nichols Garden Nursery goes a step further with its "Ecology Lawn." Nichols, based in Oregon's fertile Willamette Valley, has developed three ecology lawn mixes for various American regions. The Dryland Ecology Lawn Mix, created for most of the northern and central United States, includes rye grass, fescues, Dutch white clover, English daisies, chamomile, yarrow and baby blue eyes.

More important, however, than picking the right plants is reconsidering the actual design of your lawn. How much of it are you actually using? How are you using the different parts of your yard? By at least one estimate (likely confirmed by your mental picture of typical suburbia), turf grass occupies more than 75 percent of all residential land in the country. I doubt much of that is actually used. Lawn areas that are more visual than useable could be monocultures of low- to medium-height perennials, like ophiopogon, thrift, dianthus or low-growing veronicas. Also consider the many sedges and non-lawn grasses available — varying by region. Some of these, including blue fescue, can be used in clumping patterns, others as textured "meadows."

Think about getting rid of corners and angles (which can require a second piece of maintenance equipment) and replacing them with perennial beds. Look for random patches of turf: slivers between gardens and walks, or strips between driveways and property lines. These can be replaced with a different low-care monoculture or a diverse mosaic.

As for my sorry lawn: It is about the last vestige of turf grass on my property, so I'd like to be able to use it. But I am cinching it in a little, making a green oval set among planting beds. And, since I'm not likely to play any full-contact sports on it, I might even seed it to clover. — **ADAM REGN ARVIDSON**

The Cultural Landscape Foundation's

2007 Landslide "Heroes of Horticulture"

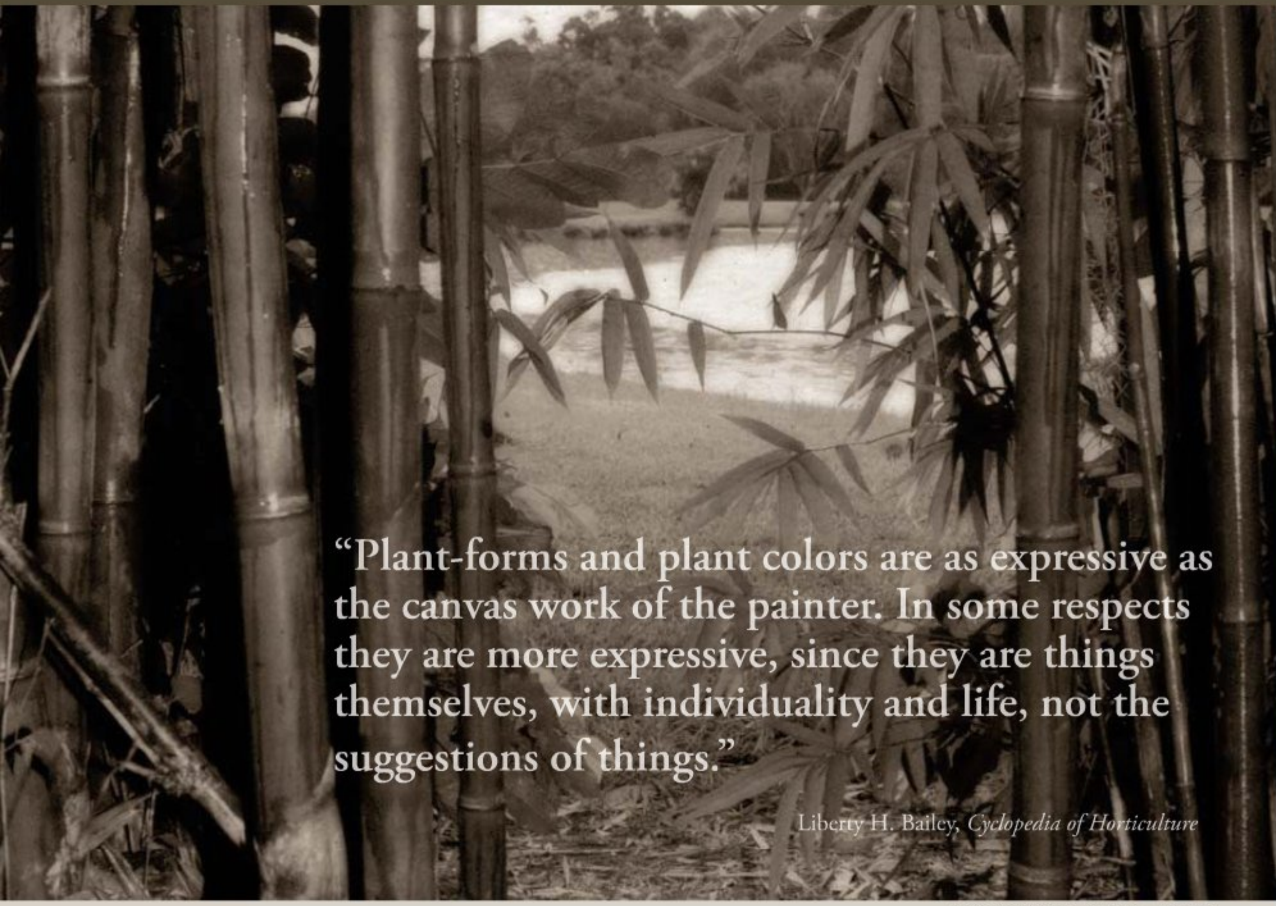


Photo Copyright © Louviere + Vanessa

The horticultural features that surround us everyday are living reminders of our country's heritage. These formal and vernacular tree and plant collections are often associated with historically important people and events that have shaped the development of communities and cultures.

They stand as living witnesses to our country's past and have the potential to bear witness to coming generations. For this, these natural elements command the same awe and admiration that our culture bequeaths upon brilliant artists, poets, and scholars.

In order to honor and help preserve our country's horticultural heritage, the Cultural Landscape Foundation's 2007 *Landslide* theme: *Heroes of Horticulture* seeks to highlight significant horticultural features that have stood steadfast in the face of almost insurmountable natural and cultural odds and because of that, born witness to the heritage of our nation.

The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF), established in 1998, is the only not-for-profit foundation in America dedicated to increasing the public's awareness of the important legacy of cultural landscapes. In 2002, TCLF established the annual *Landslide* program in an effort to focus attention on culturally significant landscape features at risk for alteration or destruction.

This year, TCLF and *Garden Design* are partnering with the George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film to produce an exhibit of original photography commissioned by the museum in support of the *Landslide* initiative. The exhibit of original photography by internationally-celebrated artists will be on view at the Eastman House Museum through March 2, 2008, and will travel thereafter. A sampling of these photographs, including works by Mark Klett, John Pfahl, Eli Reed, Louviere + Vanessa (above), and John Divola, will be featured in the January 2008 issue of *Garden Design*.

To learn more about the winning *Heroes* and to see the exhibit schedule, visit www.tclf.org/landslide.

American Sycamore Tree
Antietam National Battlefield, Sharpsburg, Maryland

Azalea Collection
Airlie Gardens, Wilmington, North Carolina

Baldcypress Grove
Spring Grove Cemetery, Cincinnati, Ohio

Banyan Tree Allée
Banyan Street, Boca Grande, Florida

Bamboo Collection (opposite left)
Jungle Gardens, Avery Island, Louisiana

Bougainvillea
Glendora, California

Bur Oak Tree
Henry Ford Estate Fair Lane, Dearborn, Michigan

Camellia Collection
Magnolia Plantation, Charleston, S. Carolina

Desert Ironwood Tree
Arizona-Sonora Museum, Tucson, Arizona

Elms of the National Mall
Washington, D.C.

Eucalyptus Tree
Washington Park Arboretum, Seattle, Washington

Horse Chestnut Tree
Susan B. Anthony House, Rochester, New York

Live Oak Allée
Main Street, Houston, Texas

Pear Tree Collection
Ellwanger Garden, Rochester, New York

Moreton Bay Fig Trees
Rancho Los Alamitos, Long Beach, California

Pow Wow Big Leaf Maple Tree
Gladstone, Oregon

Rhododendron Collection
Greendale Cemetery, Meadville, Pennsylvania

Tree Peony Collection
Linwood Gardens, Pavilion, New York

- A Society of Royal Oaks -

Cork Oak Tree
Santa Cruz, California

Angel Southern Live Oak Tree
Johns Island, South Carolina

Southern Live Oak Tree
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

PARTICIPATING SPONSORS

George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film

GARDEN DESIGN











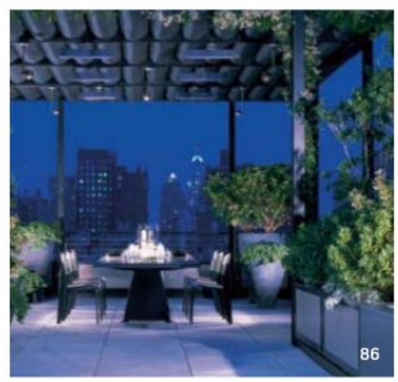












best gardens

Eleven of the greatest gardens you'll see in your lifetime gathered in one issue — enjoy

ARTECHO ARCHITECTURE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, VENICE, CALIFORNIA



Southern California landscape architect Pamela Palmer introduced water — actual and metaphorical — in a series of outdoor rooms that culminate with a breathtaking view of Lunada Bay. A runnel-like light channel spans the deck near succulents the color of the ocean beyond.



baywatch

How to make the most of a site that boasts a spectacular ocean view but no way to reach the beach? Pamela Palmer's solution was simple: Just add water

BY EMILY YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACK COYIER







PALOS VERDES ESTATES IS A SPRAWLING COASTAL enclave south of Los Angeles where rugged cliffs drop dramatically to meet the curling Pacific surf below. So instead of trying to trump the magnificent view at this bluff-top property, landscape architect Pamela Palmer decided to showcase it. And where the ocean wasn't visible, she used watery allusions to draw visitors into each space and lead to the next, until finally, like an exclamation point, the shimmering waves of Lunada Bay are revealed. "The idea," Palmer says, "was to create a procession."

Homeowner Jenny Yu requested a lush garden but left Palmer to interpret what that meant for the alternately foggy and sun-baked site. As seen from the street, scented jasmine and two pindo palms (*Butia capitata*) frame modern gates, a hint of the dense, green yet water-wise corridor to come. From there, a sand-finished concrete driveway "flows" past a bank of specimen cycads, pygmy date palms (*Phoenix roebelenii*), burgundy loropetalum and variegated mondo grass.

At the arrival area, Palmer suggested water by setting fiber-optic lighting in the ground and covering it with blue-green cast glass to resemble a runnel. The light channel points the way up broad flat steps. Meanwhile, a reflecting pool lies nestled between layers of cycads and papyrus outside the gated entry court.

Inside the intimate court, more references to the sea animate the space under


Here: A fireplace and waterfalls fill the court with comforting sights and sounds. Opposite page, clockwise from top left: The light channel and reflecting pool out front; a small lawn leading to extra parking; kentia palms in the entry court.



Stepping from the limestone deck behind the house down to the see-through glass railing, the backyard underscores the garden location at land's end. At night, the light channel allows for safe navigation from the spa to the sunken fire pit.



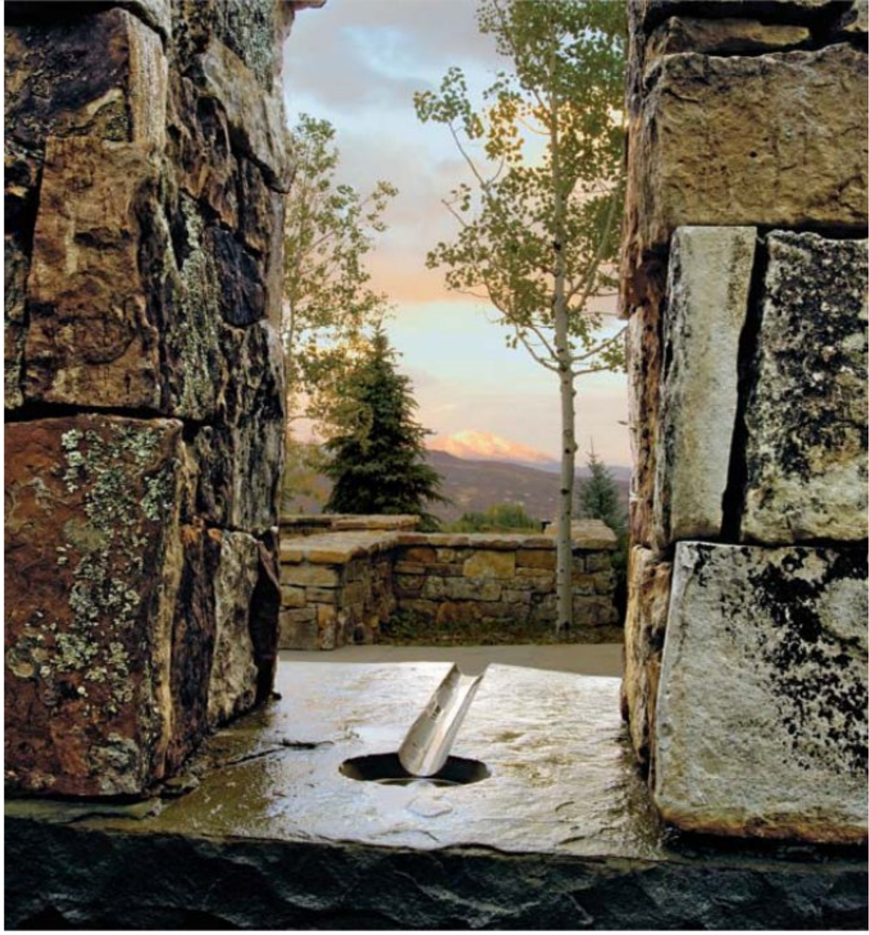
DESIGN WORKSHOP INC., ASPEN, COLORADO



BY JENNY ANDREWS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY D.A. HORCHNER/DESIGN WORKSHOP



Here: The promontory garden at this Colorado residence offers plenty of entertaining space and capitalizes on the spectacular view, which includes snowy Mount Sopris. The property was carefully constructed with walls and terraces to protect the native landscape. Right: A wall peek-through with a runnel of water leads the eye to the vista beyond.



GREEN ELEVATION

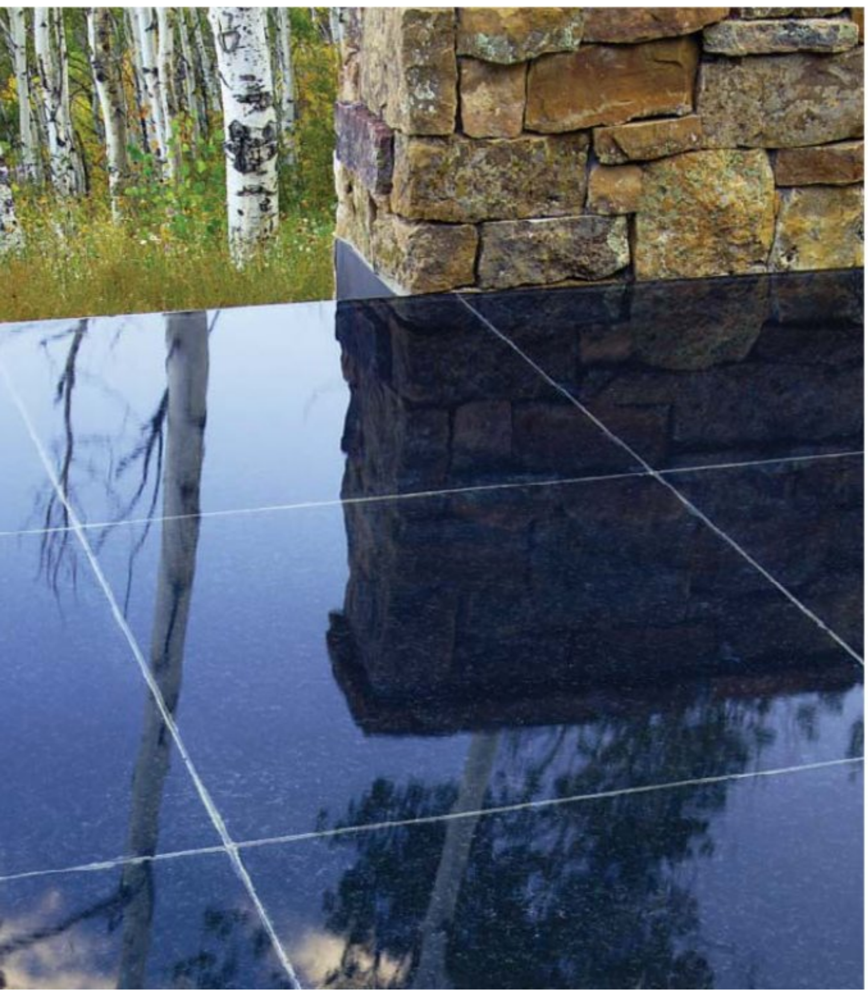
THE IRONY IN BUILDING A HOME ON A STEEP hillside is the difficulty in carving out the footprint of the structure without damaging the natural beauty that inspired the construction. But when landscape architect Richard Shaw of Aspen-based Design Workshop approached this project in the Rocky Mountains near Woody Creek, Colorado, working closely with Poss Architecture + Planning, he knew there was a way to minimize the impact while maximizing the views and assets of the surroundings.

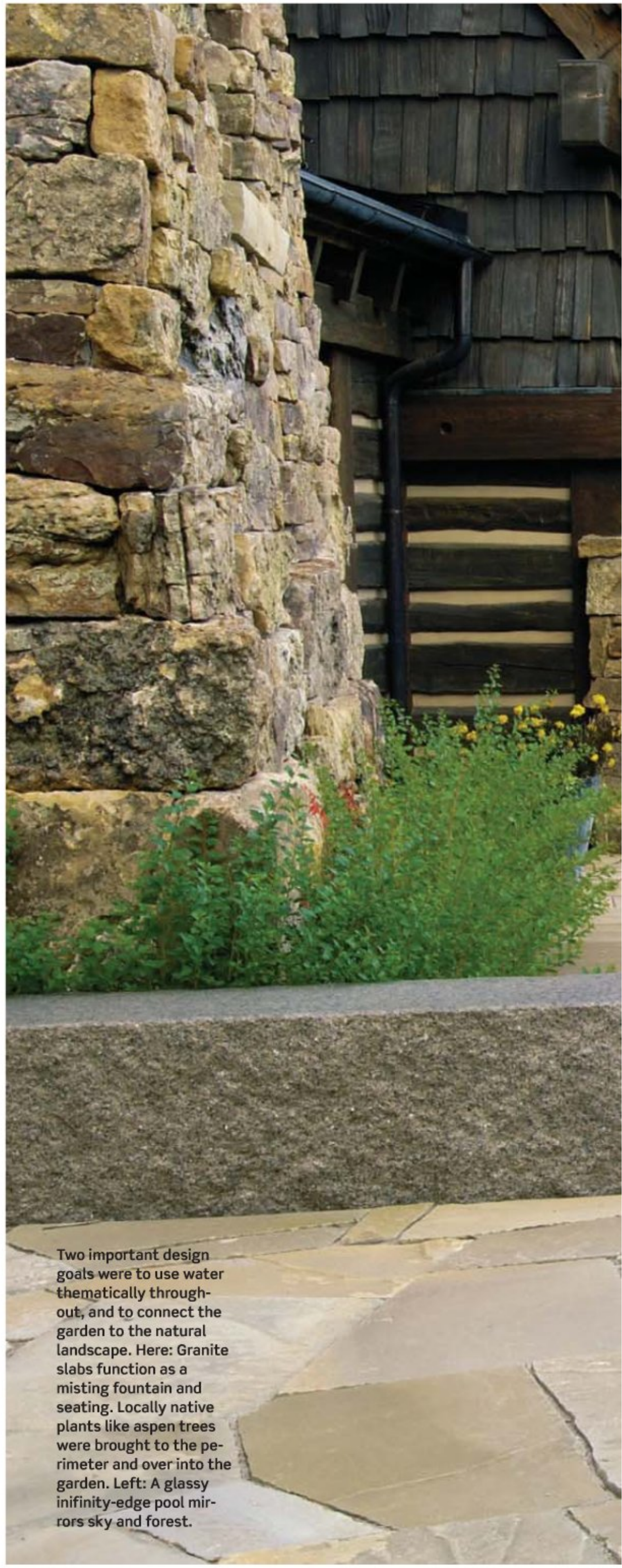
Creating a perimeter of thick walls defined the building space and protected nature outside that boundary. The rich palette of plants in the local aspen forest was then brought up to the walls and into garden areas. Taking this process to the next level, the plant mixes used, developed specifically for this project, were attuned even to altitude and orientation.

Connecting indoors and outdoors was the guiding force in the design of

both house and garden. Says Shaw, "The landscape was not a slave to the architecture," and the design was a collaborative effort between landscape architect and architect. From inside, designed and natural landscapes, intimate spaces and breathtaking vistas, can be seen from every room and at every level. Even outside, strategic gaps in garden walls frame views. Indoor living areas are on a level with outdoor living areas and garden spaces, making for easy transition. At the heart is a courtyard for entertaining, with a central pool and a garden space of lawn and perennials that is also a green roof over service areas. A tenting option for the terrace means the party can go on even with frequent afternoon showers.

Another of Shaw's goals was to explore the "states of water and how it can move." Emerging as mist from a granite slab in the entry courtyard, cascading from walls like snowmelt, traveling along runnels, reflecting the scenery in still pools, water becomes, visually and thematically, a connective tool, linking created and natural habitats. *For more information, call 970-925-8354 or see designworkshop.com.*





Two important design goals were to use water thematically throughout, and to connect the garden to the natural landscape. Here: Granite slabs function as a misting fountain and seating. Locally native plants like aspen trees were brought to the perimeter and over into the garden. Left: A glassy inifinity-edge pool mirrors sky and forest.





Opposite: The spare architecture of the house is reflected in the landscape — a row of clipped hollies, reclaimed granite steps and climbing hydrangea framing the garden gate. Here: White flowers of *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabelle'.

SILENT TREATMENT

The discipline and quietude of the Shaker movement inspired this harmonious garden of uncompromisingly modern spirit

BY JOANNA FORTNAM PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF MCNAMARA



RIGHT: MARIANNE MAJURUS





Although it's often taken for granted that a garden gets better with age, it isn't always true in reality. However, according to Bruce Eckerson, principal designer for Wesley Stout Associates, this "Shaker Modern" garden in Westport, Connecticut, has most definitely improved over time, thanks to its "inherent structure and simplicity." He explains that "great clients" (both of whom are themselves designers) and "a location with a strong traditional identity" were the serendipitous combination that produced a successful alchemy of classic and contemporary.

The owners' collection of mid-century modern furniture initially intrigued Eckerson; he was impressed at how naturally they settled it into the pared-down interior of their traditional New England house. This sparked the realization that his essential task as designer of the garden was to "take the traditional skin of the house and put a contemporary twist on it," and he adhered to this principle consistently throughout the design process. The stern, simple public face of the house offers barely a hint of a whole other world of intimate entertaining spaces and garden rooms beyond. In this property of just under an acre, the key to creating harmony was a precisely defined and detailed concept. And that was how Eckerson and his clients arrived at the mantra "simple, subtle, sublime and silent." Having distilled their vision, they followed through rigorously.

Starting with the entrance through the garden gate, the design works to both conceal and reveal the site. The outdoor "foyer" contains a long, narrow koi pond that soundlessly reflects the pure geometry of the house and garage. This room unfolds onto the dining court, which is the central outdoor space with a dining table under







BELOW: ROB CARDILLO

From left: The dining court is furnished with a Massimo teak table from Henry Hall and Toledo chairs by Jorge Pensi. Double-flowered white lilac 'Miss Ellen Willmott'. Tiered boxwood topiaries mark the transition from pool to shower.



Adjacent to the pool (at far right) and accessible from the master bedroom, the outdoor living room is a cozy family space centered on a large fireplace with a surround of reclaimed granite curbing. Neutral Sutherland furniture spans the seasons.





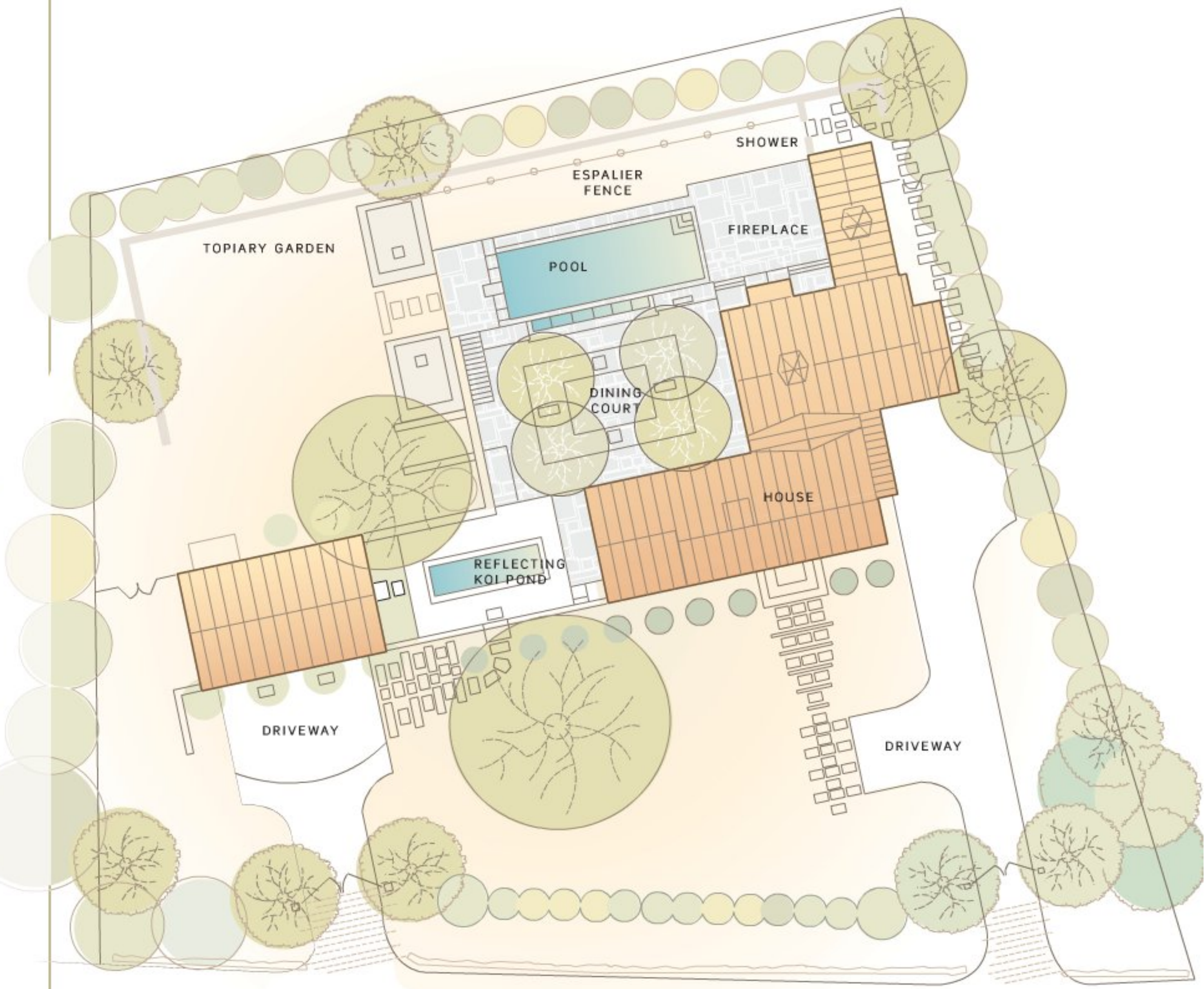
Here: The reflecting koi pond serves as the connector between house and garage, and as the "foyer" to the garden. A subtle palette of green — hostas, Siberian iris, boxwood — adds texture.Below: Feathery blooms of native goatsbeard, *Aruncus dioicus*, seen beside the urns.



shaker modern

Designer Bruce Eckerson shares his interpretation of the tenets of modern Shaker design: **SIMPLICITY:** Constantly work to pare down the design to its most essential, elemental components. Eliminate unnecessary flourishes. **SILENCE:** Not quiet in the audible sense, but in the feeling that all elements of the garden are where they should be. Nothing is out of place. No one element is more important than the whole. **MATERIALS:** Keep the palette to a minimum and repeat them throughout. An excess of materials dilutes the overall strength of the composition and can create visual clutter. **WATER:** Essential in the garden, water can be used in tight, reflective sheets in contemplative rooms or actively in fountains to create soothing white noise. Avoid loud, crashing fountains. **PLANTS:** Use simple evergreens like boxwood or holly to reinforce the structure. They also provide a clean counterpoint to flowering plants.

BELOW: ALAN & LINDA DETRICK; ILLUSTRATION: BRENDA WEAVER





the canopy of four linden trees flanked by a 20-foot-long water wall. A cantilevered granite staircase anchors the corner of the court, ascending the nine-foot grade change up to the pool, play lawn and outdoor living room. The outdoor living room is nestled in the corner of the house framed by the master bedroom suite and the exercise room. With direct access out from both rooms, the outdoor living room is an extension of these interior spaces. A large outdoor fireplace anchors the space.

The owners particularly admire designers Russell Page and Dan Kiley and Eckerson refers to them both. Page's special gift of combining French-inspired formality with relaxed touches of wildness and intimacy came to the fore in the arrangement of rooms around different social functions — dining, sitting and swimming. Kiley's modernism appears in the expression of boundaries and volumes — spaces overlapping, trees massed together, mowed edges to delineate spaces.

Eckerson deliberately limited the palette of landscape materials; strict editing was second nature to the clients and thus key to the garden they wanted. To visually reinforce the interconnection of outdoor spaces, granite was used for paving and walls. Stainless-steel railing, granite finishes, teak furniture and handrails, and a policy of mostly white flowers (plus a few blue) ensured the look remained in line with the original "Shaker Modern" idea. Clipped hollies and boxwood with white hydrangeas and rhododendrons predominate; busy perennial borders were considered at odds with the guiding aesthetic. The result is a harmonious and highly personalized place. Like a beautiful piece of Shaker furniture, the outdoor spaces are joined and finished in a simple, functional way that reveals a unified vision. *For further information, call 203-966-3100 or see wesleystout.com.*



sky's the limit

During the day, you wouldn't know how carefully this garden in Faqra, Lebanon, was crafted to create nocturnal ambience. With lighting fixtures completely concealed in the landscape, the touch of a button that lights up fire pits throughout seems like magic a la Mindfreak. Based in Broumana, Lebanon, this year's winner of the ASLA/*Garden Design* Residential Award of Excellence, Vladimir Djurovic is an illusionist in his own right, engaging Lebanon's endless sky by deconstructing it and piecing it back together as vast terraces and crystalline pools. The residence's owner, renowned fashion designer Elie Saab, must be in his element in this garden. Djurovic says the landscape is meant to show "how simplicity in design and well-crafted execution leave behind a sense of presence." One could say the same of Saab's own designs. Something in the landscape's elegant scale and perfect hardscape detailing connects to the fluid fabrics, angular cuts and sky-inspired colors of Saab's couture collections. *For more information, email info@vladimirdjurovic.com or see vladimirdjurovic.com.* — SK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GERALDINE BRUNEEL





MESA, DALLAS, TX
D.I.R.T. STUDIO, CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

on tap

Once the source of drinking water for a small town near Dallas, this abandoned pumping station in Highland Park is now back in circulation. Its new incarnation, designed by landscape architects Mary Ellen Cowan of MESA and Julie Bargmann of D.I.R.T. Studio, is a postmodernist celebration of industrial architecture, a preservation of local history, and a lively combination of art space and residences. Under the impetus of the property's owner, what could have been a forlorn, derelict site has been transformed into something welcoming and inspiring. Appropriately and symbolically, the site's lifeblood is water, used like an artist's medium throughout, in ground-level misters, spillways and fountains, with its fluidity juxtaposed beside the solidity of concrete structures. The Turtle Creek Pump House is also a showcase of sustainability — a sod roof of buffalo grass, native plants, a permeable motor court of pavers and grass (right). Even original mechanical elements found new life, such as benches made of electrical panels and a wellhead table. Beyond simple salvage, the pump house site is a renaissance and an example of ultimate recycling. *For more information, call 214-871-0568 or see mesadesigngroup.com.* — **JA**

MIKYOUNG KIM DESIGN
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS

poet modern

Using contemporary materials but shadowing nature in form and sensibility, landscape architect and artist Mikyoung Kim connected this ultramodern house with its woodsy three-acre surroundings near Thoreau's Walden Pond, weaving elements both functional and sculptural into the tapestry of native vegetation. An accordion Cor-Ten steel fence undulates across the landscape, inspired by the veining of oak leaves. A stitched path of pervious lilac bluestone pavers winds its way to the woods. An infinity-edge pool (above) reflects trees and sky, crisscrossed by stainless-steel bridges and wave-textured glass that offer chic shelter for koi. *For more information, call 617-738-9130 or see mikyoungkim.com.* — **JA**

"WE LOVE THE ARTFUL RE-USE ASPECT OF THIS PROJECT, IT'S TRULY RARE AND ADMIRABLE. THIS IS SUSTAINABLE IN SO MANY WAYS AND GIVES GREAT LESSON VALUE, YET IT'S ALSO PLAYFUL AND INVITING."

JURY COMMENTS ON THE PUMP HOUSE





LEFT: MIKYOUNG KIM; RIGHT: TOM JENKINS



MARIO SCHJETNAN/GRUPO DE DISENO URBANO
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

climate of color

A giant among Mexico's contemporary designers, Mario Schjetnan has spent much of his career working on public projects — parks, an archaeological museum, the restoration of pre-Aztec Xochimilco — that represent his country's rich history and design tradition. The modest scale of his own weekend home won an award for the same evocativeness. As one of the ASLA judges said, "It eloquently captures the colors, textures and culture of Mexico." The L-shaped house in the village of Malinalco, southwest of Mexico City, dates back to 1985. The heart of the place is a courtyard, paved with cobbles that allow percolation of storm water. A rill slices through, connecting a stone basin with a reflecting pool. A pink wall, the color actually selected by architect Luis Barragan, contrasts with the simple lines, spare details and rustic materials — and lets you know what country you're in. *For more, call (011 52) 5553 1248 or see gdu.com.mx.* — **BM**



ANDREA COCHRAN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

subtle & sculptural

Abundant flowers combined with Zen-like simplicity were among client requests reconciled by Andrea Cochran in this backyard behind an Olle Lundberg-designed house in San Francisco. Given the chilly climate, it was more important to the clients that the garden should work visually from inside the house than be used for outdoor living. Cochran responded to interplay in the architecture between simplicity and expansiveness by using complementary materials in the landscape: Stainless-steel bands span the garden and catch the light. The pale gravel floor and low black concrete walls create a matrix for dwarf bamboo, Japanese anemones, Japanese maples and birches along the back fence; they also delineate a mazelike path that leads to the sunniest spot. In late summer bands of white Japanese anemones add movement to this meditative, detailed, yet graphic composition. *For more, call 415-503-0060 or see acochran.com.* — **JF**

LEFT: GABRIEL FIGUEROA; RIGHT: MARION BRENNER





MFLA MARTA FRY LANDSCAPE ASSOC.
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

view find

In the vintner's paradise of Sonoma County, California, Marta Fry has combined garden and vineyard into a tasty blend. Grape cultivation, which has occurred for years on her client's land, will continue; only now it will happen in view of a perfectly sited residential compound at the base of Sonoma Mountain. The plantings around the main house's dining terrace connect with the agricultural landscape via repeating hedgerows of European hornbeam (at left). An outdoor kitchen features a built-in Thermador Char-Glo drop-in BBQ and furnishings from Henry Hall and is just one of several terraced garden rooms connected by a series of monolithic stone stairs that disappear into the vineyard. With so much room to play, one could be less thoughtful, less economical, about the way space is used. Instead, Fry created the garden rooms on a slope that is less suitable for grape production, and the vineyards, growing boutique varietals like 'Cabernet Franc', 'Malbec' and 'Petit Verdot', meet the house directly. *For more information, call 415-543-8202 or see mflasf.com.* — **SK**

"EXQUISITE. THE STRUCTURES ARE PLACED LIKE JEWELS IN AN AGRARIAN SETTING. WE PARTICULARLY LIKE HOW THE PROJECT REESTABLISHED THE HILLSIDE IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY. THE POOL AND WALLS ARE EXTRAORDINARY."

JURY COMMENTS ON SONOMA COUNTY



LEFT: MFLA; RIGHT: JEREMY HARRIS PHOTOGRAPHY

SURFACEDESIGN, INC.
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

hot tub magic

Every bachelor crib should have an Austin Powers moment, and the hot tub cover in this sleek urban space in San Francisco, by Surfacedesign Inc., delivers. A three-sided ipe box, the cover, when moved off the tub, slides on steel rails for 40 feet through the garden, the fairer ipe contrasting with horizontal California redwood walls darkened with Cabot stain. As it rolls, the cover morphs into three features. One, when the tub is in use, it offers a deck for sunbathing and toe dangling. Two, rolling toward the house, it enters a planted zone, providing a modernist frame for hellebores, spring bulbs and box hedges. Three, docked at the dining terrace, the cover is the perfect bar-height surface for a post-soak mojito while watching the cook. *For more, call 415-621-5522 or see sdisf.com.* — **JF**



In the evening, this garden becomes all about the drama of light. Expertly placed fixtures by B-K Lighting play up the glass Bisazza tiles glimmering in the fountain, and the planting boxes where the leaves, spires and needles of thyme, lavender, artemisia, sage and Japanese white pine twinkle.

KISS



THE SKY

A Manhattan rooftop garden is designed for living the high life

BY SARAH KINBAR PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILLY CUNNINGHAM



STORY UPON STORY ABOVE THE HUM and clatter of Manhattan, a rooftop garden by Sawyer/Berson Architecture & Landscape Architecture is a flawless set for fair-weather parties that have kept growing in frequency and size since the design project was completed. "Our client, an old friend of mine, likes to have weekend guests and get-togethers — he loves nothing more than to cook and entertain. He wanted a space to accomodate a lot of people," says founding principal J. Brian Sawyer. "So we designed a serious outdoor living space. We basically created the same program outdoors as he has indoors in the penthouse."

Every site has a story — this one is no different. As required by the building management company, the entire installation had to be designed to be disassembled and removed. "The entire thing sits on four columns, not touching parapet walls, the elevator bulkhead or anything. Basically, we made a steel deck on top of which everything sits," says Sawyer. Despite its modular nature, the garden has a feeling of permanence.

When he first came to Sawyer, the client knew he wanted a change beyond the standard rooftop terrace. "He just didn't know how far he wanted to go with it," says the designer. The architects were ready with a quiver full of ideas. "We were very influenced by Paul Rudolph's recent renovation of the East River townhouse, Beekman Place, and the way it uses exposed steel to engage the urban environment."

Let it be said that Rudolph is known

Above: A drop-in Lynx 42-inch grill has three red brass burners for a total of 75,000 BTUs, a large removeable smoker box and halogen surface light. Opposite: Chris Lehrecke, working through Ralph Pucci (ralphpucci.net), custom-designed the sofas from mahogany finished with a maritime sealer.

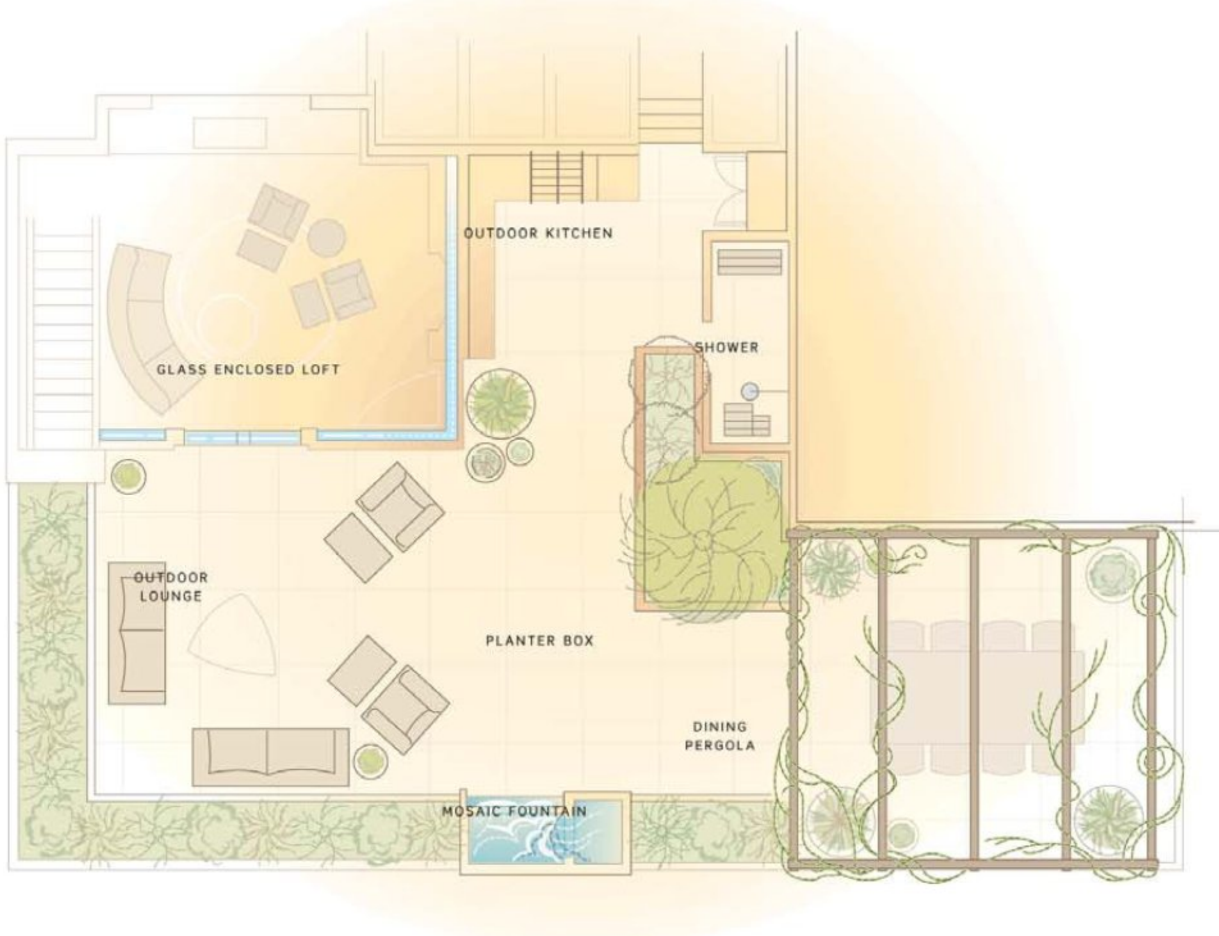


LEFT: DANA GALLAGHER





The silhouette of the dining chairs is stunning and apparent in day or night due to its sheen and strong lines — the chairs were inspired by an original Jean Prouvé school chair, and custom-made in adult size.



best for creating seamless indoor-outdoor residences along Florida's Gulf Coast, which established the Sarasota School of Architecture, and that the magic of those houses and their landscapes is translated to this kindred garden on a Manhattan rooftop, a thousand miles away.

The view is different, too. Trade the mellow blue-green Gulf for a landscape of water towers poking into the horizon. But no one's complaining. "It is one of our most successful projects in that it is used exactly for the purpose it was designed for and even more. Entertaining in the garden is the central part of his life. I've seen him cook for 100 up here," says Sawyer. The kitchen's lustrous black granite counters and Lynx 42-inch grill do make for a compelling cooking experience.

Instead of conflicting with the industrial view, the garden aims to work with its surroundings through its use of steel and concrete for structural elements and surfaces. The water tower relates to many in the distance. Yet the feeling of a retreat is still present, established by comfortable furnishings and richly layered planter boxes. Ralph Pucci furniture designer Chris Lehrecke custom-designed some pieces, including sofas and lounge chairs. The dining table and chairs inspired by French architect Jean Prouvé were designed by the firm. The plant palette was borrowed from gardens you'd find in the Hamptons near the beach where the wind and weather give the vegetation something to think about. Says Sawyer, "We knew those plants could handle the weather." Northern bayberry, herbs such as sage, thyme, rosemary and lavender, inkberry, and the creamy white panicles of 'Tardiva' hydrangea growing in planters and black, concrete Lunaform containers tone down the edges of the garden while standing up to windy days in New York. *For more information, call 212-244-3055 or see sawyerberson.com.*

ILLUSTRATION: BRENDA WEAVER

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PLANT HUNTER BY DAN HINKLEY

State of Independents



I WONDER IF I AM JUST ANOTHER ANGRY WHITE gardener. You know the type. We are irate in general but don't know exactly why or what for. We don't like to look too closely at the basis of irritation for fear we are ourselves at the root.

What makes me angry? Plastic pine mulch. Badly constructed basalt retaining walls. Graceless, rounded meatballs of shrubs. Perennials and annuals bred to fit the nursery delivery rack. In truth, a lot of stuff makes my blood boil.

But what really gets me hot under the collar is buying hot dogs. For every package of 10 hot dogs, I must choose to buy either



ROB CARDILLO (2)

Above: The dry border at Western Hills Nursery, path edged with blue *Echium vulgare*. Right: The Juniper Level Botanic Garden at Plant Delights Nursery functions as a testing ground and showpiece setting for plants.

eight or 16 buns, and in my case at least, six freezer-burnt buns are thrown in the trash nine months later. That really upsets me.

As disjointed as this may seem, the frank/bun template plays heavily in my role as angry white gardener. The horticultural version is the 144 pack versus the 72 pack. Let me get you up to speed on the latest trends in Europe, translating in short order to American soil:

Plants are produced in flats that have a variety of "planting cell" numbers. In recent years, the plug-producing industry standard has gone from a flat of 72 cells to a flat of 144. With the advent of tissue culture — that is, producing plants in test tubes — this makes good sense. Under the right conditions, a single culture of a typical perennial can easily result in 6 million plants a year. The new practices eliminate the lag time inherent in traditional horticulture, so the more "units" comprising a minimum order, the better.

Yet a youthful specialty nursery that must dabble in the "newest" to remain viable and visible is now forced to purchase 144 plants rather than 72, despite the fact that, realistically, only 65 will sell. Furthermore, these growers are as reluctant to toss out the excess plants as I am to discard those unused buns. They are potted, all 144, and with such a surplus of product on hand, they're priced correspondingly low. And this is the point when I become really angry — because those plug producers are also selling to middlemen who supply the so-called "category killers" of the world. The entire concept of the 144-cell flat is driven by the Big Bad Box business plan, wherein the sheer quantity of plants and seeds ordered undercuts the price to such an extent that the independent garden center or specialty nursery can't compete, even after cutting their prices to near break-even levels. The long-term ramifications for good plants and good service at a fair price are enormous.

This seemingly insurmountable set of circumstances was the topic of discussion over a delectable dinner of freshly slain white asparagus that I enjoyed while staying near Düsseldorf in Germany this spring. I was a guest of Anja Maubach, the fourth-generation owner of the highly revered Arends Maubach Nursery, founded by her great grandfather, Georg Arends, in 1888. An opulent series of garden stalwarts has originated here, including *Aconitum* x *arendsii*, *Phlox* x *arendsii* and a colorful assemblage of *Astilbe* x *arendsii*. The talk

that night, despite a flow of sublime German vintages, was sober. In spite of a picturesque setting, tasteful marketing of dry goods and a cult following, Arends Nursery is, in its 120th year, at considerable risk of shuttering.

Anja explains the dilemmas she faces, pointing to the western sky through the kitchen window, toward the vast horticultural industry of the Netherlands, the cause of her nursery's tenuous state. "It is not just overproduction that has made it nearly impossible to compete as a specialty nursery," she says. "It is the type of plant that has become dominant in the marketplace. Only the easy plants are produced. Those requiring more patience and skills are left behind. It has made rather dumb the choice of plants now available."

This has been heard before, on numerous occasions, over dinner with friends and fellow nursery owners across the English Channel where I have spent a considerable amount of time during the past two decades. With a few exceptions, the small nursery in England is on life support. And the same issues perplex the green industry in North America.

Near Raleigh, North Carolina, Tony Avent owns and operates Plant Delights, one of the most highly regarded mail-order nurseries in North America. Tony and I have spent time together plant hunting in South Korea and Southwest China. Mail-order nurseries are particularly dependent on new introductions, the rarest and weirdest providing the loft to elevate their catalogs to the top of the heap. Avent notes that securing the latest in-fashion plant has become increasingly challenging. "Box stores have shortened the time span between new plants entering the market and reaching the consumer," he says. "I have actually seen new patented perennials for sale (in those stores) before I could obtain one elsewhere."

Perhaps what is more startling is the abbreviated time these new "wonders" remain on the mass-market shelf. The time-tested concept of having plants thoroughly evaluated for garden worthiness before mass production begins has fallen apart. The very best plants offered for sale this year will probably never be seen again, as their promotion has little to do with any potential for classic status. It is not unheard-of to have glossy campaigns promoting plants that have yet to experience life outside the laboratory, let alone in the garden.

Long-established Western Hills Nursery in Occidental, in Northern California, was

without question the big bang in American plantsmanship. No other nursery in North America is more responsible for exposing a burgeoning gardening community to plants it had never before heard of, lifting our collective consciousness of our own potential and creating a truly American gardening identity.

In 1960, Lester Hawkins and Marshall Olbrich moved north from San Francisco to three acres just south of the Russian River, what would ultimately become the mecca of American horticulture and a salon of liberal thinking. As most North American plantspeople can attest, before 1970 plants for sale in the United States that might be considered truly exotic were few and far between. Western Hills became the standard bearer for what nurseries should and ultimately would be.

Upon the deaths of the founders, Hawkins in 1985 and Olbrich in 1991, the nursery passed into the able hands of English transplant Maggie Wych, who continued the tradition of handmade plants. After considerable soul searching, Ms. Wych sold the business in 2006 to Robert Stansel and Joseph Gatta, who wish to carry the project forward and preserve the garden. In a crowded field of American gardens making a case for preservation, Western Hills stands out as a truly noble candidate.

In a conversation with Mr. Stansel, it becomes clear that their decision to purchase the nursery and garden came from their affection for the property and reverence for its history, as well as from their desire to blend their passion for plants with making a living. The ultimate success of their endeavor will depend on them refashioning the practices of the nursery to match the rapid-fire shifts in American horticulture.

"Making our collection available to the entire continent through mail order, promoting education, a broader invitation to enjoy the historic garden throughout the year — all of these will aid us in being competitive," Mr. Stansel said. And in line with what seems to be the conclusion of specialty and independent nurserymen worldwide, the new owners are refusing to do battle with discount megamarketers. "Acknowledging that we cannot possibly compete with the big guys will allow us to fine-tune our plants to make our nursery unique, well-supported by our passion and in a position of leading and not following."

Those words made me just a little less angry and just a little bit more hopeful.

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Best Park Ever

Ken Smith: From the Big Apple to the Great Orange, creating a park for the 21st century in California



ANY WAY YOU VIEW IT, DESIGNING THE FIRST great park of the 21st century is a challenge. However, it becomes just a bit easier when your urbane trendsetting master landscape architect (darling of the New York art and design elite) and your staunchest tree-hugging, species-protecting environmental advocate turn out to be different sides of the same person. The project, of course, is the spectacular new Orange County Great Park (known locally as the "OCGP"). The versatile master designer is Ken Smith (of Ken Smith Landscape Architect). And the challenge is to convert 1,360 acres of the decommissioned El Toro Marine Corps Air Station in Irvine, California, from "brownfields" into a sustainable Eden.

With construction already underway, the OCGP will attract Southern Californians — and visitors from around the world — as a sports and culture destination, with playing fields, art and music venues, and miles of gardens and trails highlighting regional plants and plant communities. One can arrive by train or drive (and leave the car in a perimeter parking lot), then take an orange shuttle — or borrow an orange bike — for a day's adventure. Hard-core park addicts may opt instead to live nearby in the new Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and take the train to work. And for the benefit of local fauna (bobcats and coyotes, please take note!), by the end of the year grading should begin on a major new wildlife corridor — "no humans allowed."

At first glance, Smith might seem an



Left: In this rendering, the orange hot-air balloon conceived of by artist Mary Miss launches on a 500-foot flight over the Great Park. Above: Hard hat in hand, Ken Smith on the job site.

TOP TO BOTTOM: THE GREAT PARK CORPORATION; KEN SMITH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

unusual choice for the new park's master designer: Tall and slender, wearing designer black and his trademark round black "Le Corbusier" eyeglasses, he'd look more at home in SoHo than in sunny suburban Orange County. At 54, he is a well-established iconoclastic intellectual, a New York-based designer known for his edgy and succinct small-scale urban spaces. His wry tour de force at New York's Museum of Modern Art is one of the world's great landless landscapes, an inaccessible roof garden of plastic trees, faux stone, crushed glass, recycled rubber and gravel. And some New Yorkers cast a quizzical eye over the artificial turf he installed for "lawn" at 55 Water Street. So how does Smith's history of conceptual urban landscape design transfer to the ecological and cultural reclamation of an abandoned air base?

The answer appears to be, "amazingly well." In fact, each of Smith's radical urban design solutions magically captures the Zen and the zeitgeist of its place, purpose and time. At the OCGP, historic runways provide sightlines and formal structure, while grading and vegetation define spaces. Smith's design detail sketches also show industrial materials (including fabrics) used in ingenious and colorful ways, a symbiosis of practicality and creative design.

Smith's impressive design team includes Mia Lehrer, ASLA (Mia Lehrer + Associates), and Steven Handel, PhD (Green Shield Ecology), who are hard at work on a 55-acre botanical garden. Handel and his staff are in charge of site-wide ecological restoration, so that, as Handel says, "Plantings near buildings and in public areas are part of the park's sustainable natural system, not separate from it." Enrique Norton serves as project architect; Patrick Fuscoe is project engineer; and project management is in the hands of Yehudi Gaffen of Gafcon.

Some 150 years ago, Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. and Calvert Vaux faced similar design challenges when they created their plan for New York City's Central Park. Thus OCGP's leadership is seeking ideas and advice from the Central Park Conservancy, which maintains Central Park and its extraordinary 19th-century legacy. The two parks' core values are similar: Meadow, woods and water will provide a haven where people from many backgrounds can meet, play, study nature, relax and re-center. Today, both parks also require good management and sound public-private partnerships. Douglas Blonsky, president of the Central Park Conservancy and Central

Park's administrator, believes that "The Great Park is today what Central Park was 150 years ago — a dream coming to reality."

Orange County is ethnically and economically diverse, and the park's three-part site plan will provide activities to engage all manner of visitors. The southwestern portion of the park, with easy access via train and highway, will focus on active sports. Within the central north-south corridor, a stream will flow though two miles of man-made canyon, luring visitors into groves and through gardens. To the south, a 24-acre lake will provide shoreline sites for cultural attractions such as museums, theater and music venues (it will also serve as a supplemental irrigation reservoir). "Both adults and children live such scheduled lives today," says Smith. "This is a place to lose your schedules."

In fact, the Great Park site is near more than 38,000 acres of set-aside city, county, state, federal and private natural resources and its wildlife corridor will be part of 12 miles of habitat connecting the Santa Ana Mountains with the Pacific shore. Much of the site will be planted in drought-tolerant waist-high coastal sage scrub. Streamside woodlands will be planted primarily in native California sycamore, willow and cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*). Many landscape projects deplete wildlife diversity; this one will increase, interpret and sustain it. The park's Agua Chinon zone (between the canyon and the wildlife corridor) will provide a second wildlife haven: Here, Smith and his team are creating a portal through which humans can enter, explore and appreciate the "parallel world" of ecological plant communities and the fauna that will find a supportive refuge there.

As it was with Central Park, the timeline for implementing the OCGP project will be measured in decades. When last seen, Smith was unpacking boxes of new cookware, awaiting a small wine shipment and wondering when his new furniture would arrive. Realizing his commitment to the Great Park, he's secured a West Coast apartment to serve as a home base during his frequent trips to Orange County. As the park moves off the boards and onto the ground, and the Great Orange balloon carries its visitors aloft to see the "park in progress," Smith is settling in. — **NOEL VERNON**

Noel Vernon, ASLA, is an avid preservationist and associate dean of environmental design at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona.



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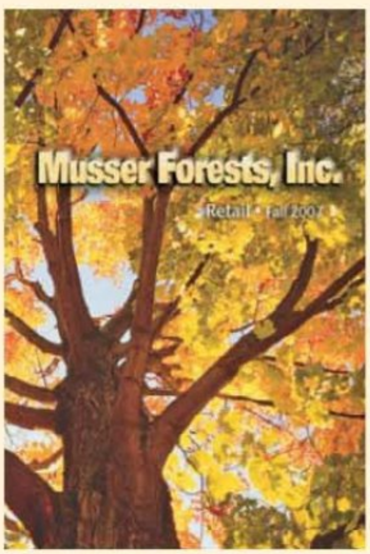
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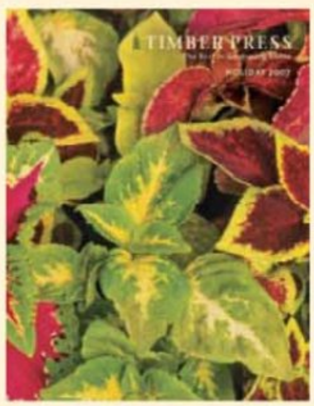
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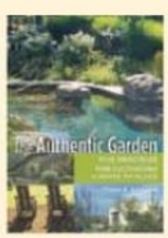
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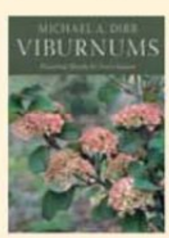
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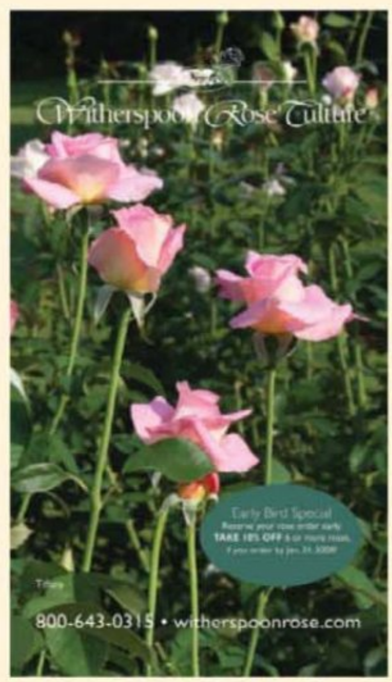
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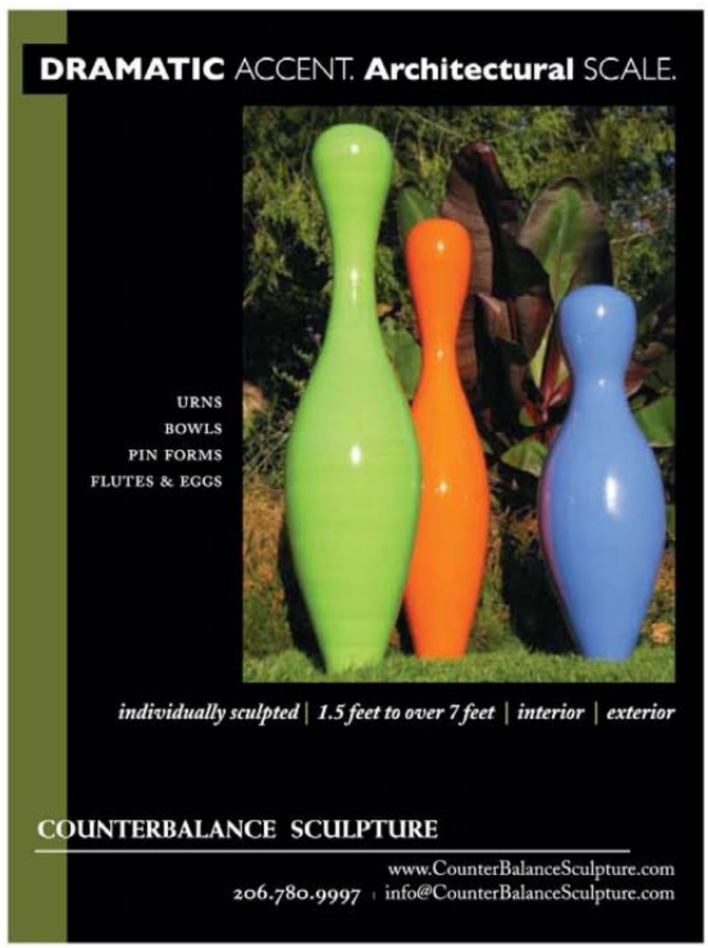
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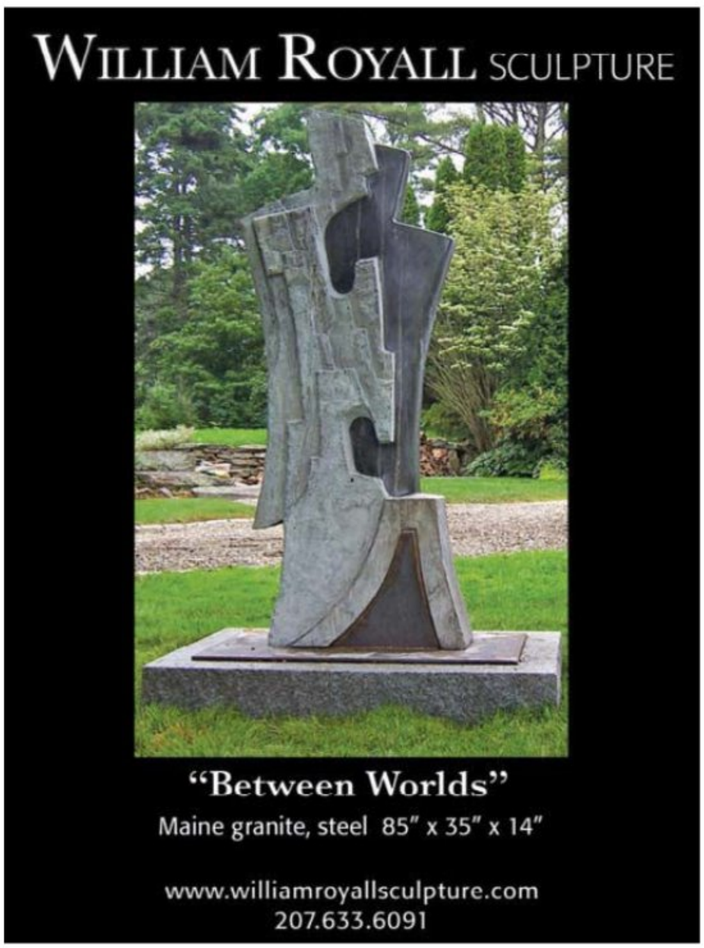

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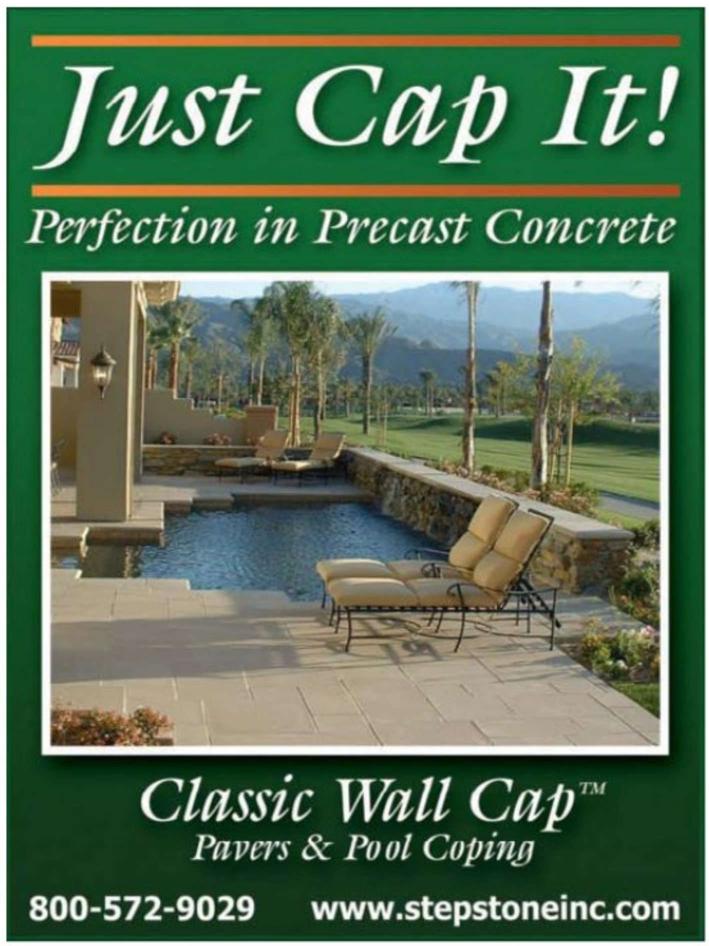

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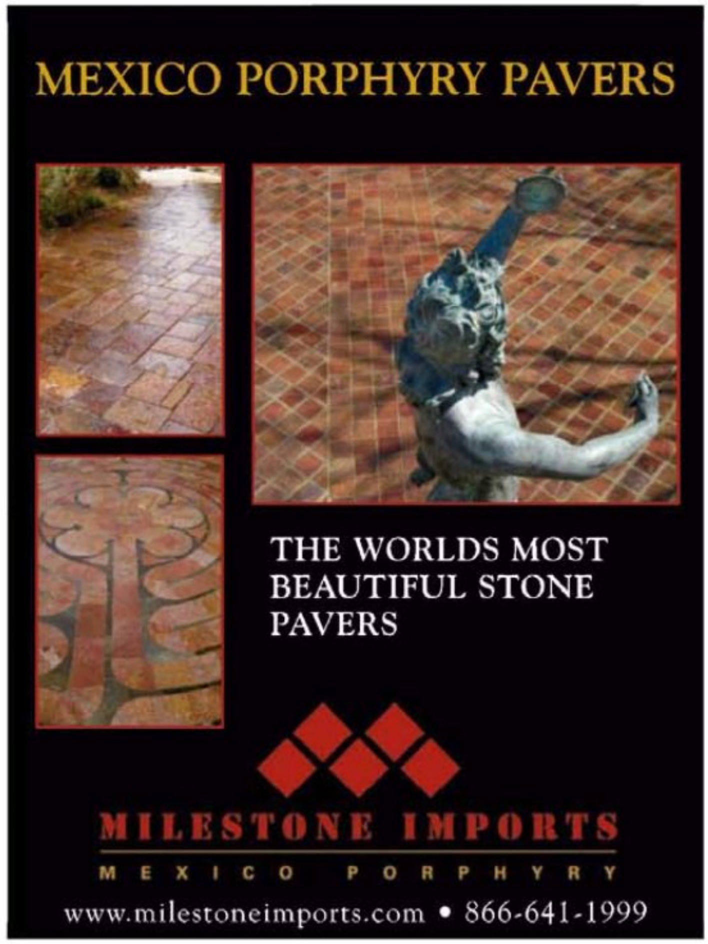

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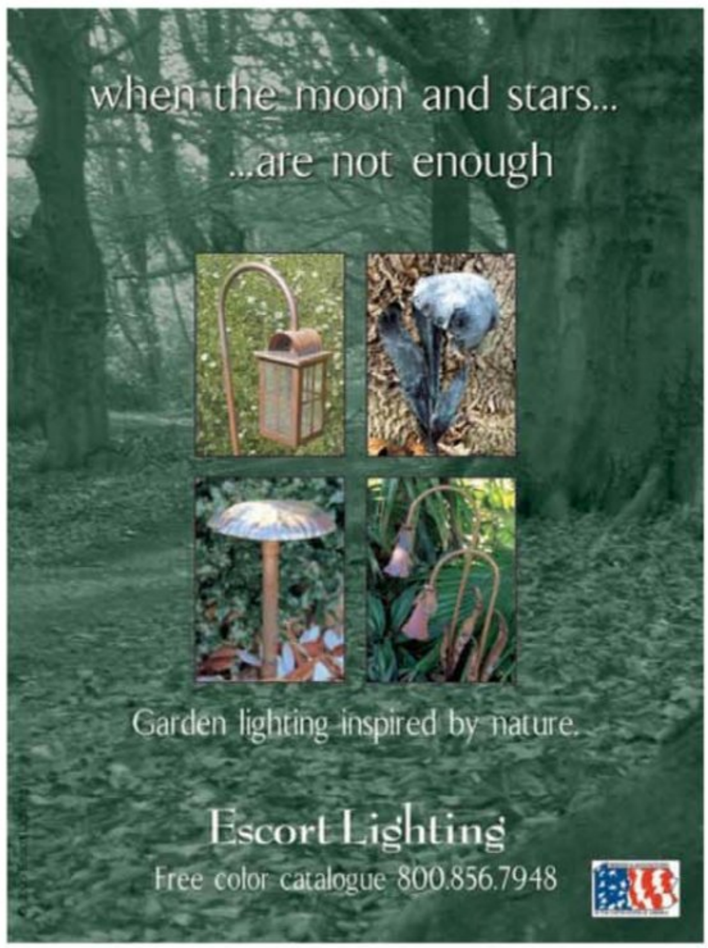

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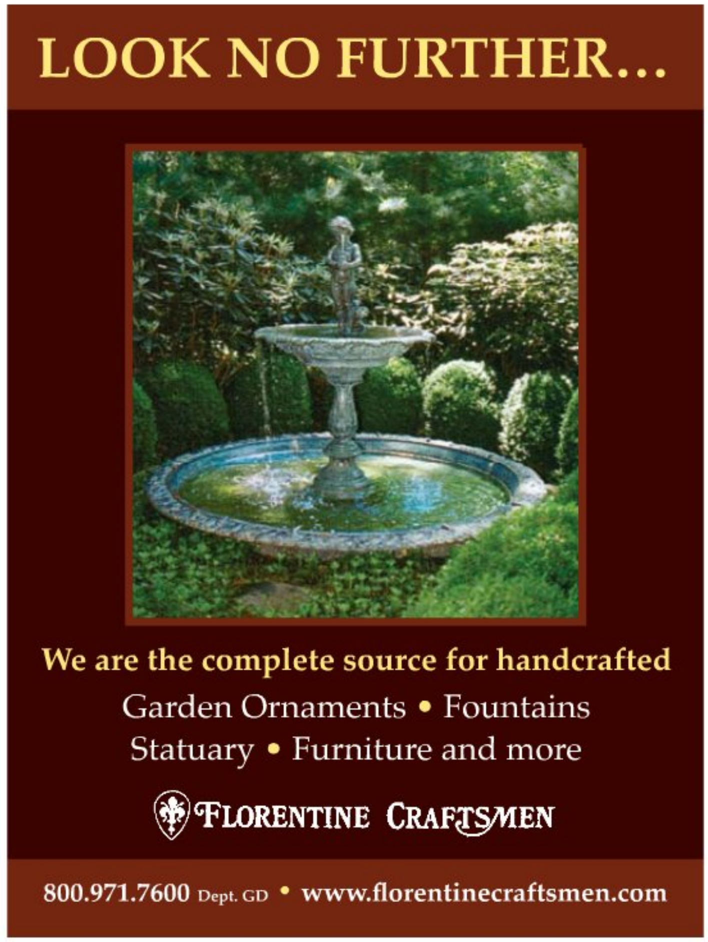

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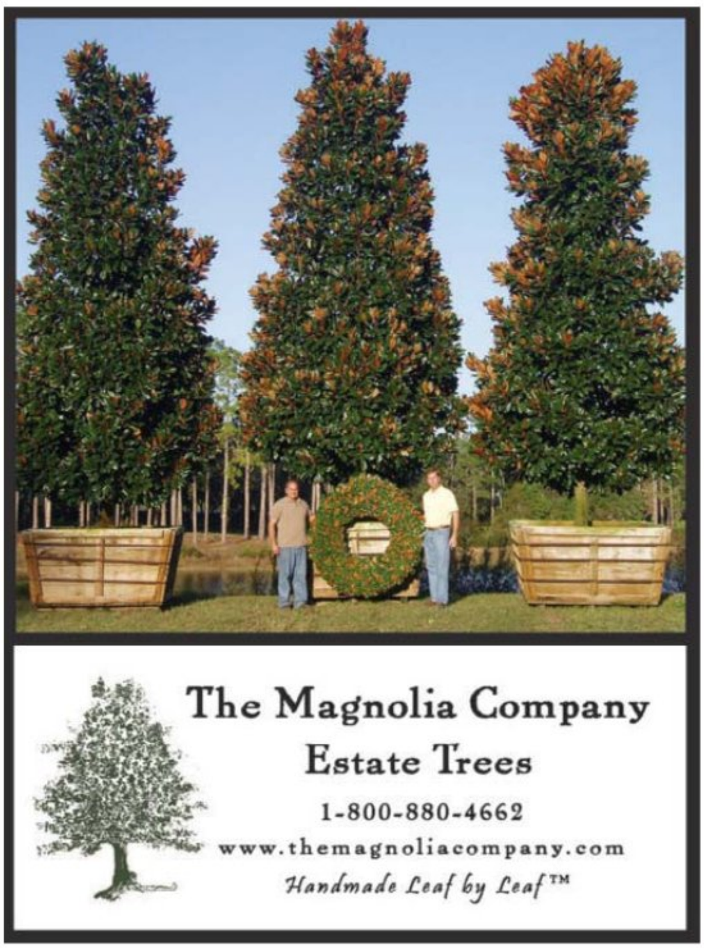

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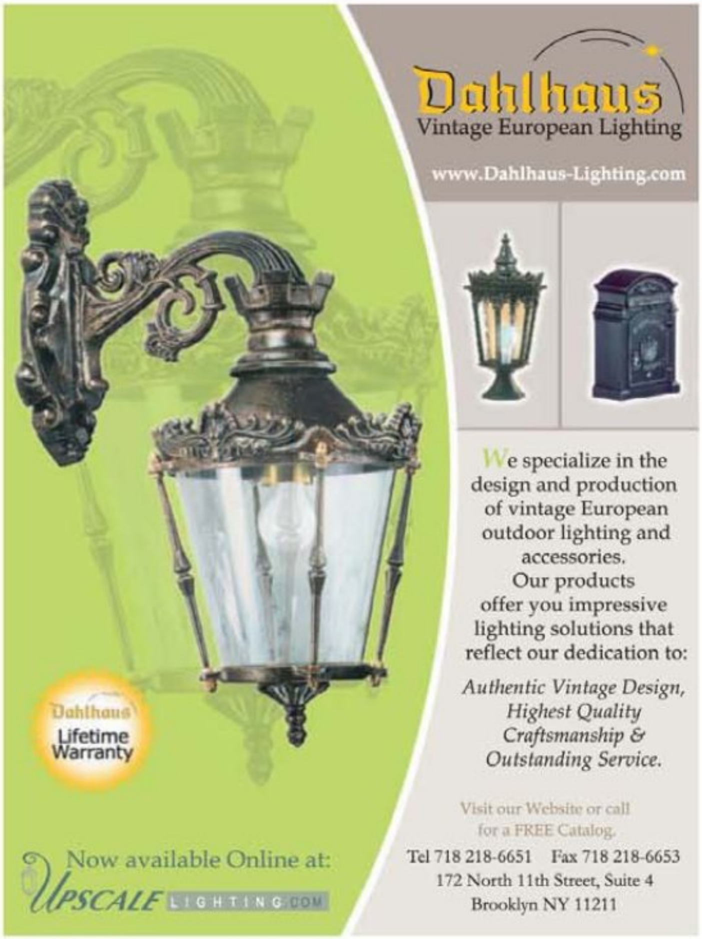

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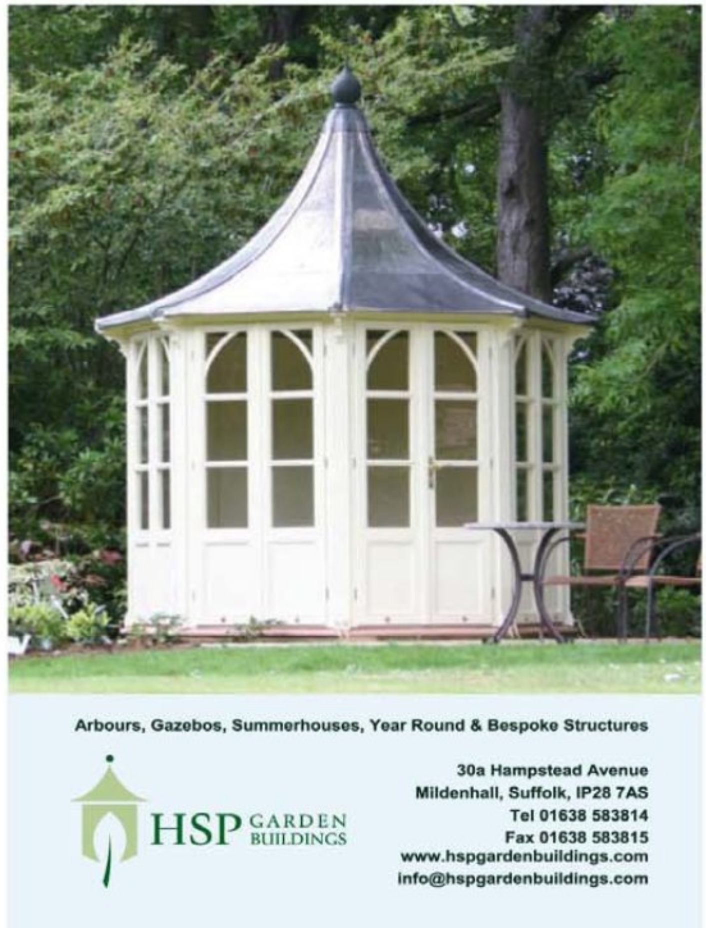

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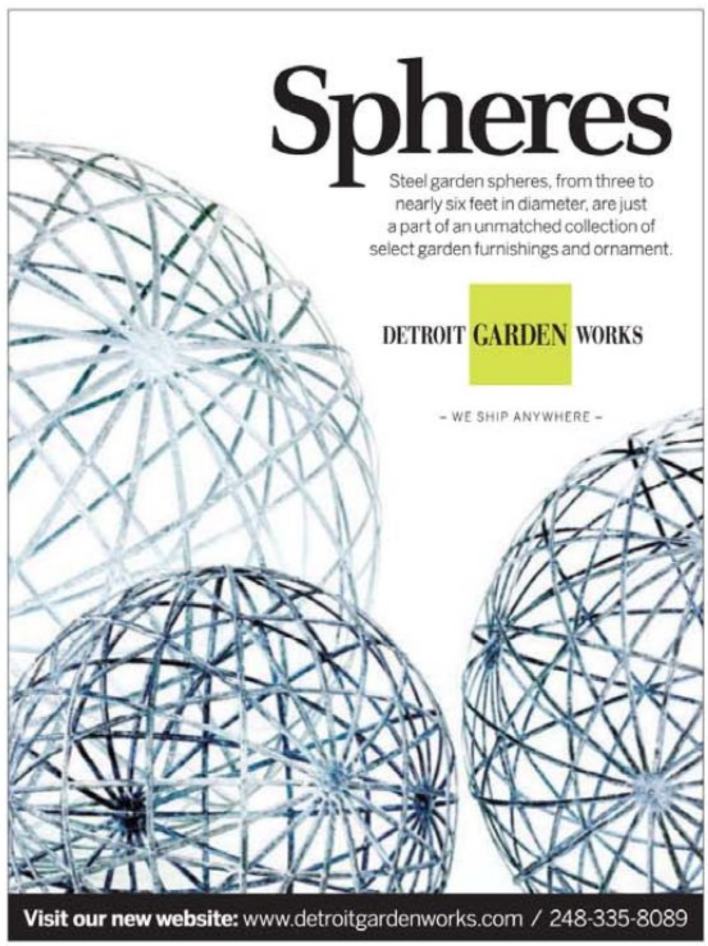

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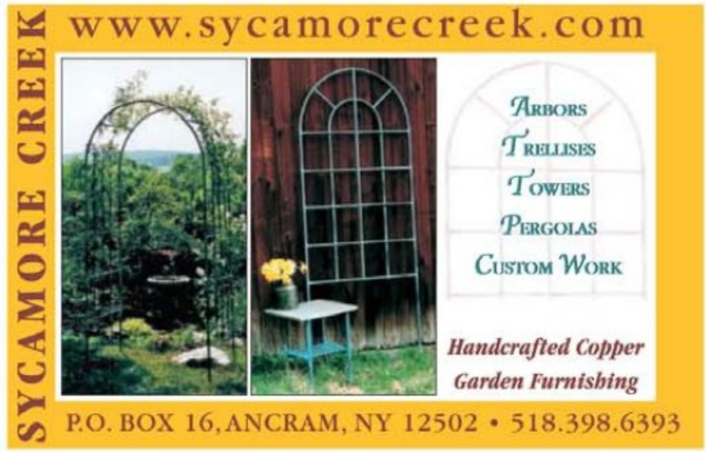

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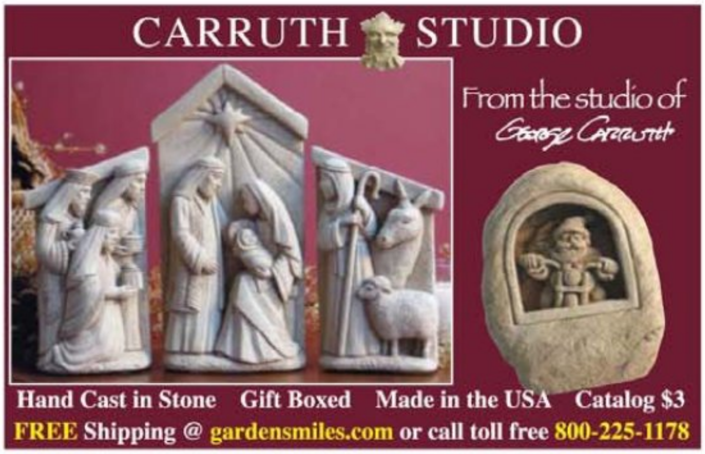

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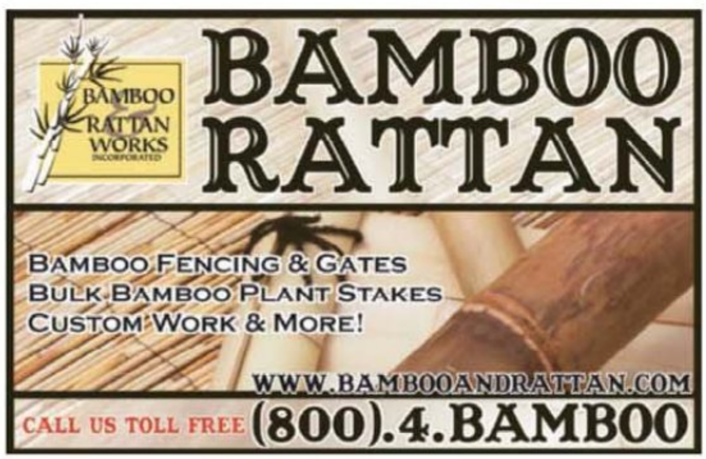

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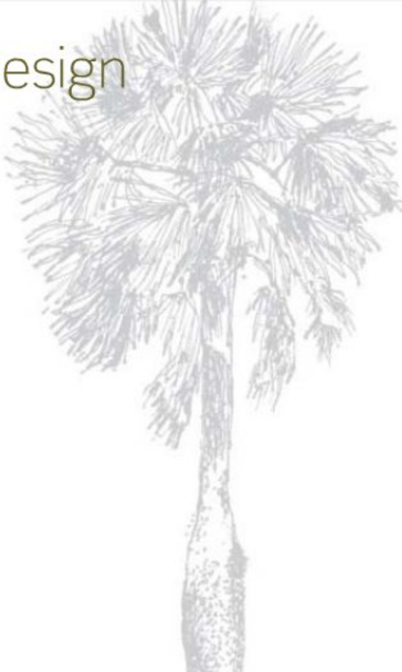

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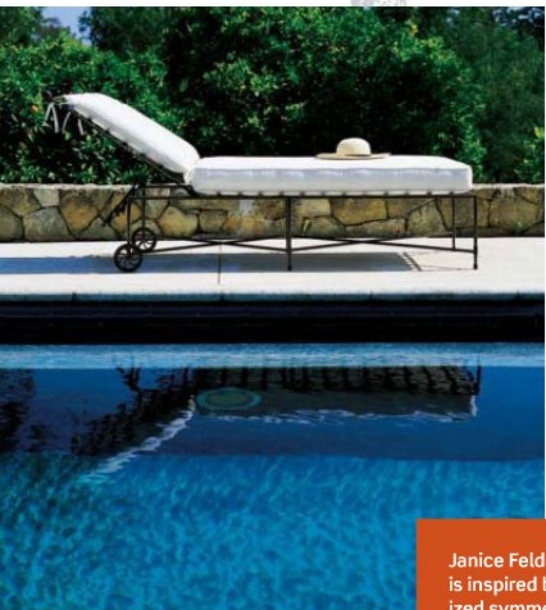

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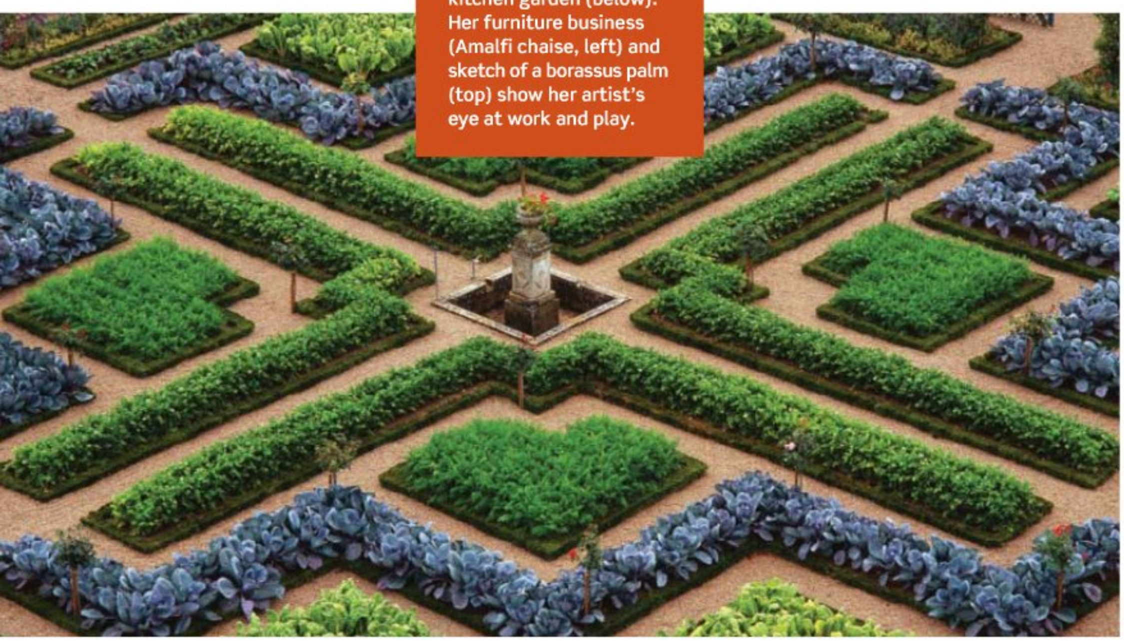
JANICE FELDMAN

Outside the Box

THE GO-TO WOMAN FOR OUTDOOR FURNITURE WITH GREEN CREDENTIALS AND high-style contemporary looks, Janice Feldman is president and CEO of JANUS et Cie, with 10 showrooms including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and San Francisco. Based in Montecito, California, she draws, paints and travels the world in search of new designers and innovative materials.







Janice Feldman (right) is inspired by the organized symmetry of a kitchen garden (below). Her furniture business (Amalfi chaise, left) and sketch of a borassus palm (top) show her artist's eye at work and play.

Q. *Why do we need outdoor living?*
A. Any time we can connect with nature, it makes us feel more connected to ourselves.
Q. *Which places have inspired you?*
A. Views of agricultural landscapes seen from an airplane. Rows of lettuces and herbs in a kitchen garden. I love the patterns and the counterpoint of color, the organization and texture. It's a link to how I communicate visually.
Q. *Who is the biggest influence on your work?*
A. I would have to fire myself if there were a definitive answer to this. But I could suggest my mother because she always says: "You can be anything you want to be."
Q. *What do you try to avoid?*
A. Shellfish and negativity. I'm allergic to both.
Q. *Where do you go to recharge?*
A. Home — or the original Golden Door spa.
Q. *What is your single greatest achievement?*
A. Being an honest person.
Q. *What do you value in your own garden?*
A. There is a 150-year-old oak tree outside my bedroom that represents a kind of sanctuary for me. Also, I have pieces of sculpture that I like very much. Objects of personal significance in a garden make it into something deeper, more important.
Q. *When are you happiest?*
A. When I am painting or drawing. I travel with my paint box and sketchbook — they are the nucleus of my inspiration.
Q. *Do you have a style secret?*
A. It's no secret — I tend to like symmetry.
Q. *What do you aspire to?*
A. Excellence.
Q. *Town or country?*
A. Country. —**JF**

For more information see janusetcie.com.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY JANUS ET CIE (2), CLIVE NICHOLS

